

# WRITING STANDARDS

LET'S TALK PERFORMANCE

A Guide  
for Parents



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# Introduction

## Understanding the BC Writing Performance Standards: A Guide for Parents

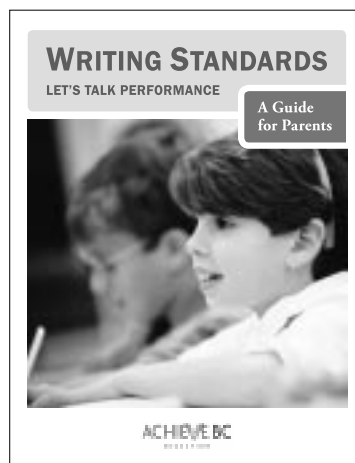
**T**his is one of two documents developed to provide guides for parents to the BC Performance Standards for Reading and Writing.

The parents and educators who developed *Let's Talk Performance* hope its use will:

- ♦ help parents know more about their child's performance
- ♦ help support children's learning
- ♦ help schools and families talk about reading and writing performance.

Many educators around the province use the BC Performance Standards to assess students' reading and writing performance. Parents showed an interest in the standards and wanted to better understand what they mean. Parents and educators involved in this project worked together to clarify ideas in the performance standards for reading and writing.

The parents and educators who developed these guides hope you find them useful in supporting your child's reading and writing. Working together, you and the teacher can help your child have a more successful school year. Together we can reach a shared goal in helping your child get the best education possible.



**Parents and educators worked together on this project.**



# What Are the BC Performance Standards?

**T**he BC Performance Standards were developed for voluntary use in BC schools. They describe the standards and expectations for learning.

## What Are “Levels of Performance”?

Performance standards describe levels of achievement. They answer the questions *How good is good enough?* and *What does it look like when a student’s work has met the expectations at this grade level?*

The BC Performance Standards describe and show examples of four levels of performance. These include:

### **NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS**

- ♦ the work does not meet grade-level expectations, and help is needed

### **MEETS EXPECTATIONS (MINIMAL LEVEL)**

- ♦ the work may be inconsistent and needs some support but meets grade-level expectations at a minimal level

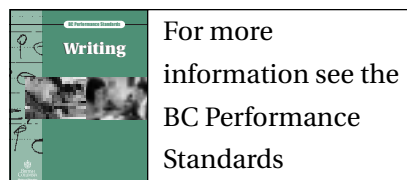
### **FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS**

- ♦ the work meets grade-level expectations and is achieving the prescribed learning outcomes

### **EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS**

- ♦ the work exceeds grade-level expectations in significant ways, and the student may benefit from extra challenges

**The BC Performance Standards were developed for voluntary use in BC schools. Teachers are not required to use them.**





# What Are the Parts of the Performance Standards?

## 1. PERFORMANCE SCALES

**Rating Scale.** This scale describes the four performance levels in detail.

The performance standards describe four levels of performance at each grade level.

Rating Scale: Grade 4 Personal, Impromptu Writing				
Student achievement in personal, impromptu writing by March-April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.*			Personal, impromptu writing is not intended for an audience beyond the teacher. It is usually expected to be checked for errors but not revised or edited.	
Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.		The writing presents loosely connected ideas with little development (may be short); parts may be confusing or flawed by frequent errors.	The writing presents relevant, easy-to-follow ideas with some detail and explanation. Shows growing control of written language; few errors.	The writing is clear, focused, and developed with some elaboration and individuality.
<b>MEANING</b> • ideas • use of detail	• purpose or topic may be unclear • few details; these are often copied or unrelated to the topic; often very short	• focuses on retelling; may include some general reactions and opinions • few details, reasons, and explanations; often relies heavily on ideas discussed in class or includes unnecessary detail	• offers some analysis and reaction, often connected to writing an experience; there is an emerging sense of individuality • elaborates main ideas (with some supporting details, reasons, and explanations) (e.g., how student felt)	• develops a point of view or opinion with some sense of individuality or originality; personality of the writer comes through • develops ideas through some engaging details, reasons, and examples, often with some emotional impact
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity, variety, and impact of language	• basic language; often includes errors in word choice • sentences are poorly constructed, with little variety or control (may be written as one sentence)	• generally simple language with little variety • relies on simple and compound sentences; little variety	• generally relies on clear and direct language, with some variety (e.g., adjectives, interesting verbs) • some variety in sentence length and pattern	• language is varied and increasingly precise; often experiments with figurative language or with new words and expressions • flows smoothly with a variety of sentence patterns and lengths
<b>FORM</b> • beginning • focus • organization and sequence • connecting words • ending	• beginning may be confusing, with no clear topic or purpose • unfocused ideas often seem unrelated to topic or to each other • little development; often very short • disjointed; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., and, then) or omits them altogether • ending may be missing or illogical	• usually identifies the topic in a title or first sentence • most ideas are loosely related to the topic • middle is often simply a list of events in the order they occurred • repeats a few simple connecting words (e.g., next, then, so, because, after, when, but) may omit them in places, causing abrupt transitions • often omits endings	• introduces the topic or issue • sticks to the topic; ideas are relevant (but may not be developed) • middle often consists of a list of related reasons, examples, and details; organization is easy to follow • uses a variety of ordering or connecting words (e.g., next, then, so, because, after, when, but) to make connections among ideas; may omit them in places • ending may be abrupt (i.e., ends, but does not conclude)	• introduces the topic or issue in a clear and often engaging way • clearly focused; selects relevant and appropriate material to develop the topic • sequence is logical • transitions are smooth; uses an increasing range of transitional words to make connections among ideas • includes a conclusion
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • punctuation • grammar/usage	• frequent repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand • many incomplete or run-on sentences • may include simple words; word endings may be omitted or formed incorrectly • capitals and periods often omitted or misused • frequent errors in pronouns (omitted, misused, pronoun agreement) and verbs (omitted, subject-verb agreement)	• includes several errors; these may make parts hard to follow • most simple sentences are correct; may include some incomplete or run-on sentences • most simple words are spelled correctly • most basic sentence punctuation is correct; commas and quotation marks may be inconsistent • some grammatical errors, often with pronouns (omitted, misused, pronoun agreement, incorrect form) and verbs (subject-verb agreement, tense)	• some errors, but these do not affect meaning • most sentences are complete; few run-ons • most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes • basic sentence punctuation is correct; may be errors in use of commas as they try to write longer, more complex sentences • most pronouns and verbs are correct; may be some errors in subject-verb agreement, especially where there are compound subjects, and in pronoun form	• few errors; these do not interfere with meaning and are usually caused by taking risks with newly acquired or complex language • sentences are complete; longer or more complex sentences may include some errors • most words are spelled correctly; may include errors in complex, specialized, or technical words • basic sentence punctuation is correct, including commas and quotation marks • pronouns and verbs are correct; may be occasional errors in long or complex sentences

**Quick Scale.** This is a short form of the *Rating Scale* (see above).

Quick Scale: Grade 4 Personal, Impromptu Writing				
This Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March-April of the school year. Personal, impromptu writing is usually expected to be checked for errors but not revised or edited.				
Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.		The writing presents loosely connected ideas with little development; parts may be confusing or flawed by frequent errors.	The writing presents relevant, easy-to-follow ideas with some detail and explanation. Growing control of written language; few errors.	The writing is clear, focused, and developed with some elaboration and individuality.
<b>MEANING</b> • ideas • use of detail	• purpose or topic may be unclear • few details; may be copied or unrelated to the topic; often very short	• retells; may give some opinions • few relevant details, reasons, and explanations; often relies on ideas from class discussions	• some analysis and reaction, often connected to retelling • some supporting details, reasons, and explanations (e.g., how student felt)	• develops a point of view or opinion with a sense of individuality • develops ideas with some engaging details, reasons, and examples
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity, variety, and impact of language	• basic language; often errors in word choice • poorly constructed sentences; little variety	• generally simple language; little variety • simple and compound sentences; little variety	• clear, direct language; some variety • some variety in sentences	• language is varied; often tries new words • flows smoothly; has sentence variety
<b>FORM</b> • beginning • focus • organization and sequence • connecting words • ending	• beginning may be confusing • unfocused ideas seem unrelated to topic; may be very short • disjointed; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., and, then) or omits them altogether • ending may be missing or illogical	• usually identifies the topic • middle is often simply a list of loosely related events • repeats a few simple connecting words (e.g., and, then, so); may omit them in places • often omits endings	• introduces the topic • middle is often a list of related but undeveloped reasons, examples, and details • uses a variety of connecting words (e.g., next, then, so, because, after, when, but) to make connections among ideas; may omit them in places • ending may be abrupt (i.e., ends, but does not conclude)	• introduces the topic, often in an engaging way • develops topic through relevant, appropriate ideas, logically organized • smooth transitions; range of effective connecting words • has a conclusion
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • punctuation • grammar/usage	• frequent, repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand • many incomplete or run-on sentences	• several errors; these may make parts hard to follow • most simple sentences are correct; some incomplete or run-on sentences	• some errors, but these do not affect meaning • most sentences are complete; few run-on sentences	• few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks • complete sentences; may include some errors in long or complex sentences

The BC Performance Standards are available on the Ministry of Education's web site.

The performance standards describe student achievement in March-April of the school year.

## 2. STUDENT SAMPLES

- 1 **Level of Work.**
- 2 **Teacher's Observations** – notes and comments made by the teacher about the student's writing.
- 3 **Rating Scale Icon** – a quick visual summary of the scale completed by the teacher.
- 4 **Student Work** – either a copy of the student's work or a part of the student's work and a typed copy (transcript) of the complete work. (Names of students and teachers have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.)

**1 FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS**

**Teacher's Observations**

The writing is relevant and easy to follow. It shows growing control of written language, with few errors.

- elaborates on main idea with some supporting details
- clear, simple, and direct language
- sticks to the topic with relevant ideas
- uses a variety of connecting words (e.g., then, but)
- sentences are complete
- legible and clearly presented

**3**

**4**

**TRANSCRIPT**

**My Plans for Spring Break**

During Spring Break, my family will probably get together with my cousin Kelly's family. We are going to form a little choir. But it will be more like a musical. We will go on vacation. "Good thoughts Good words Good deeds!"

GRADE 4 PERSONAL, IMPROMPTU WRITING 139

This is an example of how the rating scale would look based on the above sample of student's work.

Rating Scale: Grade 4 Personal, Impromptu Writing				
Student achievement in personal, impromptu writing by March-April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.*			Personal, impromptu writing is not intended for an audience beyond the teacher. It is usually expected to be checked for errors but not revised or edited.	
Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b>	The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.	The writing presents loosely connected ideas with little development (may be short); parts may be confusing or flawed by frequent errors.	The writing presents relevant, easy-to-follow ideas with some detail and exploration. Shows growing control of written language; few errors.	The writing is clear, focused, and developed with some elaboration and individuality.
<b>MEANING</b>	• ideas • use of detail	• focuses on retelling; may include some general reactions and opinions • few details, reasons, and explanations; often relies heavily on ideas discussed in class or includes unnecessary detail	• offers some analysis and reaction, often connected to retelling an experience; there is an emerging sense of individuality • elaborates main idea(s) with some supporting details, reasons, and explanations (e.g., how student felt)	• develops a point of view or opinion with some sense of individuality or originality; personality of the writer comes through • develops ideas through some engaging detail, reasons, and examples, often with some emotional impact
<b>STYLE</b>	• basic language; often includes errors in word choice • sentences are poorly constructed, with little variety or control (may be written as one sentence)	• generally simple language with little variety • relies on simple and compound sentences; little variety	• generally relies on clear and direct language, with some variety (e.g., adjectives, interesting verbs) • some variety in sentence length and pattern	• language is varied and increasingly precise; often experiments with figurative language or with new words and expressions • flows smoothly, with a variety of sentence patterns and lengths
<b>FORM</b>	• beginning may be confusing, with no clear topic or purpose • focus • organization and sequence • connecting words • ending	• usually identifies the topic in a title or first sentence • most ideas are loosely related to the topic • middle is often simply a list of events in the order they occurred • repeats a few simple connecting words (e.g., next, then, so, because, after, when, but); may omit them in places, causing abrupt transitions • often omits endings	• introduces the topic or issue • sticks to the topic; ideas are relevant (but may not be developed) • middle often consists of a list of related reasons, examples, and details; organization is easy to follow • uses a variety of ordering or connecting words (e.g., next, then, so, because, after, when, but) to make connections among ideas; may omit these in places • ending may be abrupt (i.e., ends, but does not conclude)	• introduces the topic or issue in a clear and often engaging way • clearly focused; selects relevant and appropriate material to develop the topic • sequence is logical • transitions are smooth; uses an increasing range of transitional words to make connections among ideas • includes a conclusion
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	• frequent repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • punctuation • grammar usage	• includes several errors; these may make parts hard to follow • most simple sentences are correct; may include some incomplete or run-on sentences • most simple words are spelled correctly • most basic sentence punctuation is correct; commas and quotation marks may be inconsistent • some grammatical errors, often with pronouns (loose use; noun-pronoun agreement; incorrect form) and verbs (subject-verb agreement; tense)	• some errors, but these do not affect meaning • most sentences are complete; few run-ons • most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes • basic sentence punctuation is correct; may be errors in use of commas as they try to write longer, more complex sentences • most pronouns and verbs are correct; may be some errors in subject-verb agreement, especially where there are compound subjects, and in pronoun form	• few errors; these not to interfere with meaning and are usually caused by taking risks with newly acquired or complex language • sentences are complete; longer or more complex sentences may include some errors • most words are spelled correctly; may include errors in complex, specialized, or technical words • basic sentence punctuation is correct, including commas and quotation marks • pronouns and verbs are correct; may be occasional errors in long or complex sentences

## How to Use This Guide

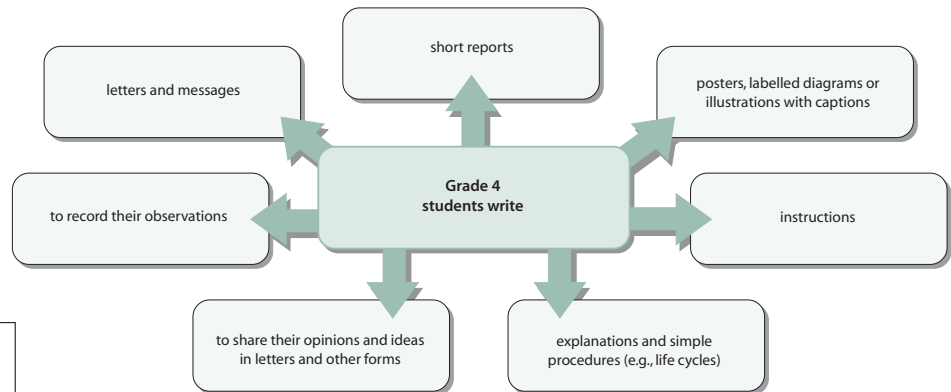
Like the BC Performance Standards for Writing, *Let's Talk Performance* is organized around three types of writing.

- ◆ **Personal, Impromptu Writing:** In school, students write to record and explore their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Personal, impromptu writing is generally not intended to be read by an audience. Because of this, it is not revised, edited, or carefully proofread. It is, however, usually checked for obvious errors.
- ◆ **Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information:** Writing to communicate ideas and information includes presenting information (e.g., articles or reports), outlining procedures (e.g., instructions), and persuading others (e.g., editorials). Students revise, edit, and proofread their work.
- ◆ **Writing Stories and Poems:** Students write stories and poems. In this kind of writing, students have had opportunities to revise, edit, and proofread their work.

**This guide is designed to encourage discussion about writing performance.**

## THE PARTS OF THIS GUIDE

**1. Activity Webs.** The webs for writing list some ways children express their ideas.



**Quick Scale: Grade 4 Writing Instructions and Procedures**  
The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement at Month 4 of the school year. Instructions and procedures are usually expected to be readily revised, edited, and proofread.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Meets Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>CONTENT</b>	The writing does not contain enough information to complete the task. Usually repeated or not. Does not explain or explain.	The writing is an attempt at an explanation or procedure. It contains some accurate information. Includes some details.	The writing competently describes and explains the task. It includes details. Communicates relevant information.	The writing substantiates the task. It includes details. Communicates relevant information. Includes details.
<b>IDEAS</b>	• topic may be unclear • does not accomplish the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• topic is clear • does not accomplish the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• topic and purpose are clear • accomplishes the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• focused around a clear topic • accomplishes the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task
<b>STYLE</b>	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task
<b>FORM</b>	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task	• does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task • does not explain or explain the purpose of the task

**2. Quick Scales and Rating Scales.** In this guide the two levels **Not Yet Within Expectations** and **Fully Meets Expectations** are used. The other levels can be found in the BC Performance Standards.

**The Quick Scales and Rating Scales** have some words in bold type and underlined. These words are defined in the question-and-answer balloons beside the Rating Scale, in the student sample on the following page, or in the performance standards. The activities for helping at home also tell more about the bold underlined words and ideas.

**Using this guide will add to your understanding of performance standards.**

**Grade 4 Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information**  
(Not Yet Within Expectations)

*Student achievement in writing to communicate ideas and information by March–April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.*

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: The snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	The writing communicates little information and does not accomplish the basic task or purpose. Often very kind, logical, and flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.
<b>MEANING</b> • clarity • task • accuracy • use of detail • sense of audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>topic may be unclear</li> <li>does not accomplish the task (e.g., reader cannot make the product or complete the process by following the instructions)</li> <li>little accurate information</li> <li>few details; these are often copied or unrelated to the topic; often very short</li> <li>shows no awareness that writing should be interesting for the reader</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity, variety, and precision of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic, simple language; often includes errors in word choice</li> <li>sentences are poorly constructed, with little variety or control (may be written as one sentence)</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> REPORTS, ARTICLES, LETTERS • opening • organization and sequence • paragraphs • text features • conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning may be confusing with no clear topic or purpose</li> <li>sequence and organization appear random</li> <li>little or no paragraphing; ideas may seem unrelated to topic or to each other</li> <li>disjointed; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., and, then) or omits them altogether</li> <li>text features (e.g., titles, headings, illustrations, diagrams) are often omitted, inaccurate, or difficult to interpret</li> <li>ending may be missing or illogical</li> </ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS, PROCEDURES</b> • titles and headings • key features • voice • organization • connecting words • graphics, visual features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>required titles or headings may be misleading or omitted</li> <li>little or no attention to form (e.g., instructions may not look like instructions)</li> <li>often write own experience rather than instruct</li> <li>may be an unrelated list or one paragraph; steps or sections are often omitted or combined</li> <li>disjointed; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., and, then) or omits them altogether</li> <li>may omit required diagrams or sketches</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • punctuation • grammar/usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand</li> <li>many incomplete or run-on sentences</li> <li>may misplace simple words; word endings may be omitted or formed incorrectly</li> <li>capitals and periods often omitted or misused</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns (overuse, noun-pronoun agreement) and verbs (have/subject-verb agreement)</li> <li>parts may be difficult to read</li> </ul>

**What is simple language?**

Simple language generally contains words that are frequently used in basic communication. For example, run, going, saw, play, boy, dog, fun, friend. To add variety and interest, students should try to find other words that mean the same thing but.

**Grade 4 Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information**  
(Fully Meets Expectations)

*Student achievement in writing to communicate ideas and information by March–April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.*

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: The snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	The writing communicates relevant, easy-to-follow ideas and information in the student's own words. Competently fulfills most requirements of the task.
<b>MEANING</b> • clarity • task • accuracy • use of detail • sense of audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>topic and purpose are clear</li> <li>accomplishes the task at a basic level (e.g., for procedures, reader can complete the basic process or make the product by following the instructions)</li> <li>information is generally accurate and written in the student's own words</li> <li>elaborates main ideas with some supporting details, reasons, and explanations</li> <li>makes some attempt to engage the reader's interest</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity, variety, and precision of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is clear, simple, and direct; some attempts to be specific or use appropriate technical language</li> <li>some variety in sentence length and pattern follows appropriate instructions (may not have variety)</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> REPORTS, ARTICLES, LETTERS • opening • organization and sequence • paragraphs • text features • conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>introduces the topic or purpose</li> <li>ideas are connected and easy to follow</li> <li>most paragraphs have a main idea and related details (tends to rely on listing related information)</li> <li>uses a variety of ordering or connecting words to connect ideas; may omit these in places</li> <li>text features (e.g., titles, headings, illustrations, diagrams) are generally clear and relevant; may have minor flaws</li> <li>ending may be abrupt (e.g., ends, but does not conclude)</li> </ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS, PROCEDURES</b> • titles and headings • key features • voice • organization • connecting words • graphics, visual features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>title or heading clearly identifies purpose</li> <li>uses most key features of the specific form (e.g., instructions are numbered)</li> <li>explains or instructs (rather than narrates); may clip</li> <li>some careful use of ordering or connecting words (e.g., before you start, after you read)</li> <li>required illustrations and diagrams are generally clear, relevant, and labeled; may have minor flaws</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • punctuation • grammar/usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some errors, but these do not affect meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete; few run-on sentences</li> <li>most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes</li> <li>basic sentence punctuation is correct; may be errors in use of commas as the student tries to write longer, more complex sentences</li> <li>most pronouns and verbs are correct; may be some errors in subject-verb agreement, especially where there are compound subjects, and/or pronoun form</li> <li>legible, clearly and neatly presented</li> </ul>

**What does topic and purpose are clear mean?**

A topic is clear when the main idea is evident and all details clearly relate to the main idea. The purpose is clear when the ideas and topic are written for a reason and the reader can tell the purpose (e.g., to give instructions, tell about a science experiment).

**What does appropriate technical language mean?**

Technical language is usually found in specific subject areas, such as science, mathematics, and computers. Appropriate use of technical language at this level means that the child is able to use sophisticated and often scientific vocabulary correctly in their writing. They understand the meanings of these kinds of words and are able to use them in ways that make sense.

**What is meant by subject-verb agreement?**

Subject-verb agreement occurs when the subject of a sentence (usually a noun) and the verb match. For example, "They rode their bikes home" contains subject-verb agreement, while "They ridden their bikes home" does not, because ridden is not an appropriate verb. A further example of lack of subject-verb agreement is "We has never been here before."

**What does topic and purpose are clear mean?**

A **topic is clear** when the main idea is evident and all details clearly relate to the main idea. The **purpose is clear** when the ideas and topic are written for a reason and the reader can tell the purpose (e.g., to give instructions, tell about a science experiment).

Question-and-Answer Balloons give definitions or examples of terms used in the performance standards.

### 3. Student Sample

Use this  
guide when  
you talk about  
writing with  
your child.

**1** NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students worked individually to select a topic of interest and write an informational page on how to do something. Their finished work was to include some features found in informational writing (e.g., glossary, bold headings, captions, maps, and diagrams).

**2** **Teacher's Observations**

The writing communicates little information and does not accomplish the basic purpose. The student needed one-to-one support.

**3**

**4**

**Student Sample**

The example shows part of the student's original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 4 by March-April of the school year.

**TRANSCRIPT**

**How to build a theme park**

My name is . Theme park's (no sim c are hard to build (some times). Sim c is a very involved game.

1. Build drink and Frie shops.
2. Build a roller coaster
3. Open the door's. Build a science le
4. Hire scientists. Research Operat
5. Train gardeners and other staff
6. Drain the lake and Train engines.
7. Open ride (wheel one)

I thought you everything I know (illustration)

Frie Shop  
Drenk shop

**Simple language** - The writer uses simple language.

**Conventions** - The writer misspells many familiar words, and word endings are omitted or formed incorrectly; capitals and periods are often used but often incorrectly.

**Topic is clear** - The topic (castle life) is clearly evident; the writing is focused around a clear purpose (to tell about castles) that is largely accomplished.

**Few errors in conventions** - The writing contains a few errors, but none that affect meaning; the writing demonstrates an understanding of sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb agreement) and basic sentence punctuation.

**Supporting details** - The writer tells more about the main idea with some supporting details, reasons, and explanations.

**Text features** - Follows most key features of the specific form of writing (e.g., glossary, boxes, captions, steps, diagrams, pictures)

**Appropriate technical language** - The student communicates information accurately using the correct terms for castle life (e.g., moat, turret).

**TRANSCRIPT**

**All About Castle Life**

My name is — and I am very interested in castles. I have learned about castles for two years. Now I want to show you what I have learned.

**How To Build a Castle**

1. Find an empty space
2. Plan the castle
3. Build a boroughs
4. Upgrade to moats and bailey
5. Include these rooms; inner and outer ward prison tower and ramparts
6. Add these for defence; moat, arrow holes and the Walled court (illustration); turrets, draw bridge, hooh, leather tunic, helmet, armour (illustration); a Dungeon is used for keeping prisoners.

**Weapons**

1. Mace club- with spiked ball on end
2. Sword- long sharp metal blade fixed to a handle
3. Axe- sharp axe head attached to short piece of wood
4. Bow and arrow curved piece of wood with string attached used to launch arrows.

**Glossary**

1. Turrets, the turrets are for archers to hide behind
2. Boroughs, small castle
3. Ramparts, ledges that defenders stood on I hope you have enjoyed learning all about castlelife.

**GRADE 4: WRITING TO COMMUNICATE IDEAS AND INFORMATION**

71

- 1 This gives a brief description of the writing lesson.
- 2 Teacher's Observations. This gives a short statement describing what the teacher noticed about the student's work.
- 3 Student Sample. The student samples in this guide are based on those presented in the BC Performance Standards for Writing. In many cases, more details have been added. The sample shows either a copy of the student's work or a part of the student's original work with a typed copy (transcript) of the complete work.
- 4 Statements in boxes tell more about the student's performance. Words that are underlined and in boldface are terms from the BC Performance Standards for Writing.

#### 4. Helping Your Child at Home (page 81)

The activities in this part of the guide are ways to help your child's writing skills at home.

The activities match the four aspects (categories) in the BC Performance Standards Quick Scale:

**Aspect 1: Meaning**

**Aspect 2: Style**

**Aspect 3: Form**

**Aspect 4: Conventions**

(see page 4 Quick Scale).

These activities focus on the writing skills and terms identified in the BC Performance Standards for Writing. Use these activities to help your child with specific needs.



#### ASPECTS OF WRITING

The four aspects of writing work together, but often a piece of writing is stronger in one area than others. Sometimes, your child may have great ideas but have problems with spelling and so on. Another time, a child may have perfect spelling and sentences but not express ideas appropriately. Sometimes, the ideas are strong, but the words and sentences are repetitive, making the writing strong in meaning but weak in style.

**MEANING** – *ideas and information, including development and use of detail.* The writer makes the content and ideas clear and interesting by including details and examples.

**STYLE** – *clarity, variety, and impact of language.* Style is the skillful use of language, where the writer chooses words to have an impact on the reader and uses variety and "flow" in sentences.

**FORM** – *attention to the "rules" of the particular form of writing (e.g., stories, instructions, poetry).* This includes how the writer begins and ends, how the ideas are ordered, and the kinds of words and phrases that lead the reader from one idea or event to another.

**CONVENTIONS** – *spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, and legibility.* These help make the writing clear and readable.

Teachers focus on these four aspects in various lessons and in many different ways. As children move through the grades, their writing becomes more complex in all aspects.

#### 5. Questions for Parent-Teacher Conferences (pages 83, 85, 87, 89)

Sets of questions are organized around the four aspects (categories) of the performance standards (Aspect 1 is Meaning, Aspect 2 is Style, Aspect 3 is Form, and Aspect 4 is Conventions). Each aspect focuses on different skills. In this section are some questions you might find useful when talking about the different aspects of writing.

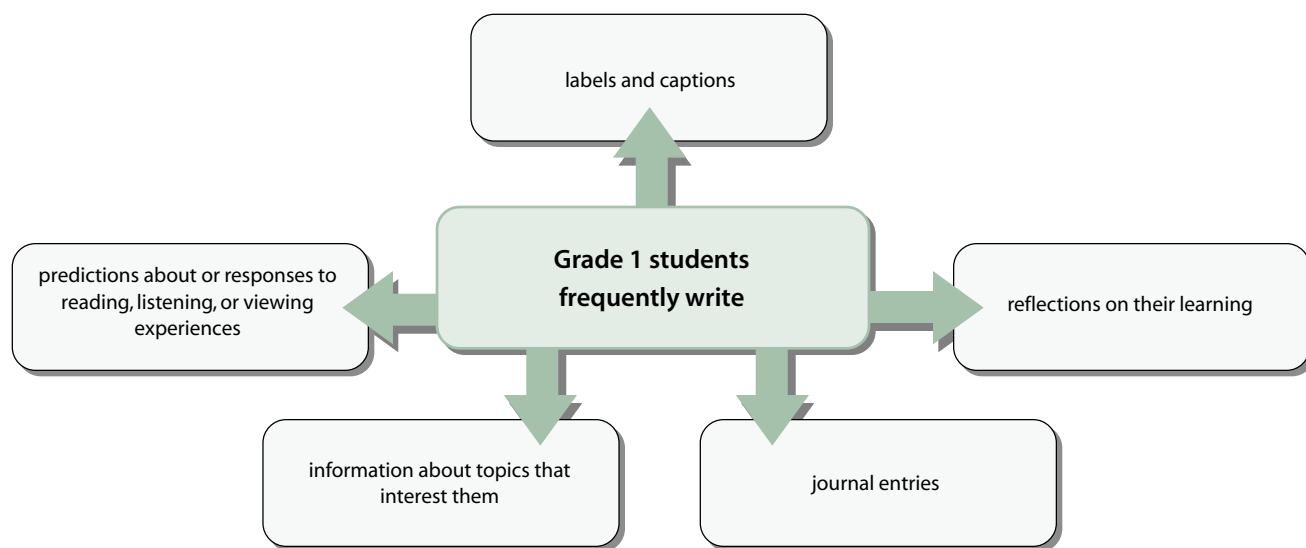
##### Questions about Meaning for Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Could you show me some samples of writing that Fully Meets Expectations for this level?
- How can I encourage my child to include **relevant details** in their writing?
- How can I encourage my child to support their **opinions**?
- How can I help my child see which **details** are important to their topic and which are irrelevant?
- How can we encourage our child to include explanations, **details**, and **examples** to clarify their written work?
- How do I encourage my child to **support** and elaborate their ideas?
- What are some ways I can help my child to write in their own words?

Note: Using samples of actual work will be most helpful as you talk about these questions.

# Grade 1: Writing from Experience

Grade 1 students are asked to represent their thoughts, feelings, and opinions using both words and pictures.



Early in Grade 1, children often tell their ideas through pictures. As they develop, they use more written words. Most Grade 1 writing is first-draft writing—students do not check their work over for errors and make changes. As students develop skills and confidence, however, they begin to check their work and make simple corrections to spelling, capitalization, and periods.

## NOTE:

In later grades, the type of writing described in this section is called *personal writing* or *writing to communicate ideas and information*. In Grade 1, the general term *writing from experience* is used to describe any writing in which students record information they have acquired or their experiences, feelings, opinions, and observations.





## Quick Scale: Grade 1 Writing from Experience

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing may consist of a string of letters or be dictated for someone else to write down. The student needs a great deal of help.</i>	<i>The writing is recognizable as conventional writing and conveys some ideas or information. The student often needs some help.</i>	<i>The writing is readable and makes sense. The student is able to write independently with occasional help.</i>	<i>The writing communicates ideas or information with some description and detail. The student is able to write independently.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> • ideas and information • details	• may be able to “ <b>read</b> ” own writing, but meaning often changes each time	• sentences or ideas may not be related • little development, few details	• sentences or ideas are related • some detail	• some individuality • develops a topic with supporting details
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity and variety of language • description	• <b>simple words</b> • when “reading” or dictating, may be one long sentence or a series of short, stilted sentences	• <b>conversational</b> • repeats <b>simple patterns</b> , favourite words	• <b>conversational</b> , some simple description • repeats simple patterns	• some descriptive language • takes risks to use new words or patterns
<b>FORM</b> • follows models or examples • sequence	• usually a drawing with a <b>string of letters</b> or one or two dictated sentences	• may be very brief • drawing may provide much of the information	• follows <b>form modelled by teacher</b> • writing can stand alone	• logically connected and sequenced • writing can stand alone
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • capitals and small letters • <b>spelling</b> • use of phonics • <b>punctuation</b> • spacing • <b>legibility</b>	• <b>strings of capital letters</b> • may show correct initial consonant • not yet able to use phonics • no punctuation • may be copied or dictated to another person	• mostly capital letters • some words <b>spelled conventionally</b> • many words spelled phonetically • may experiment with punctuation • parts are <b>legible</b>	• both capitals and small letters • many <b>familiar words spelled conventionally</b> • new or unfamiliar words spelled phonetically • some punctuation • <b>legible</b>	• both capitals and small letters • most <b>familiar words spelled conventionally</b> • phonics and word patterns used to solve spelling problems • generally written in sentences; uses punctuation • <b>legible</b>



# Grade 1 Rating Scale for Writing From Experience

## (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in writing from experience tasks by March–April of Grade 1 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing may consist of a string of letters or be dictated for someone else to write down. The student needs a great deal of help.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> • ideas and information • details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be able to “<b>read</b>” <b>own writing</b>, but meaning often changes each time</li> <li>• most of the meaning is in the drawing</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity and variety of language • description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>simple words</b></li> <li>• when “reading” his or her writing or dictating, may create one long, rambling sentence or a series of short, stilted sentences</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> • follows models or examples • sequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may not resemble the <b>form modelled by the teacher</b></li> <li>• usually a drawing labelled by a <b>string of letters</b> or one or two sentences that have been dictated to another person</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • <b>capitals and small letters</b> • spelling • use of phonics • <b>punctuation</b> • spacing • legibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>strings of capital letters</b> without spaces; single letters may represent words</li> <li>• may show correct initial consonant for an intended word</li> <li>• not yet able to use sound-symbol relationships (phonics)</li> <li>• no punctuation</li> <li>• may be copied or dictated to another person</li> </ul>

What is meant by being able to **read own writing**?

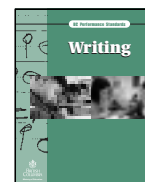
Reading their own writing means that when the child looks at what they have written, they will recall the same or similar wording each time, rather than making up a new story from the same picture.

What are **simple words** for this grade level?

Early writers tend to write exactly how they talk. **Simple words** would be words like *cat, ball, mom, me*.

What are **forms modelled by the teacher**?

Teachers often provide frameworks to help students write in a certain form. For example, *Spiders like to eat \_\_\_\_\_*. Students then add in words to finish the sentence.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students received the sentence frame “A friend is...” and wrote about personal experiences with friends.

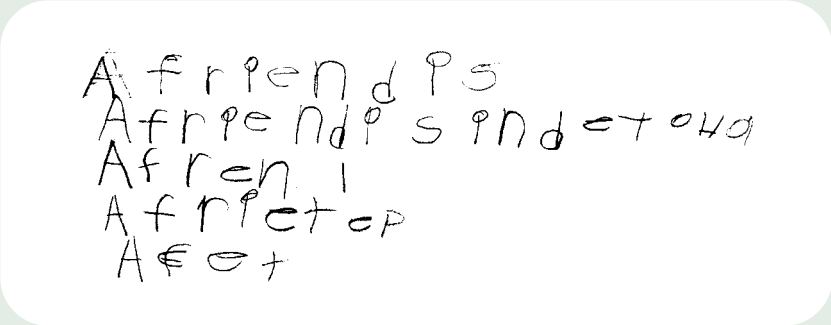
Teacher’s Observations

The student has recorded the teacher’s sentence frame and attempted to write strings of letters.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 1 by March-April of the school year.

**Read own writing** – The teacher noted that the student could “read” what he had written, but the meaning changed each time.



**Forms modelled by the teacher** – The student had difficulty using the sentence frame provided by the teacher.

**String of letters** – The student is not yet writing words but does write a sequence or string of letters to represent words.

**TRANSCRIPT**  
A friend is  
Afriendi s indet oHo  
Afren i  
Afrietep  
Afet

**Punctuation** – The writer used no punctuation.

# Grade 1 Rating Scale for Writing from Experience

## (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in writing from experience tasks by March–April of Grade 1 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is readable and makes sense. The student is able to write independently with occasional help.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sentences or ideas are related to each other</li> <li>some detail</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity and variety of language</li> <li>description</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>conversational language</b>; may include some description</li> <li>repeats <b>simple sentences and patterns</b></li> <li>may overuse pronouns, but the reader can usually tell to whom the pronouns refer</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>follows models or examples</li> <li>sequence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>follows the form modelled by the teacher (e.g., list, web, paragraph)</li> <li>writing makes sense standing alone; there may also be a detailed picture that adds information</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>capitals and small letters</li> <li><b>spelling</b></li> <li>use of phonics</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>spacing</li> <li><b>legibility</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes both capitals and small letters (may be inconsistent)</li> <li>many familiar words are <b>spelled conventionally</b></li> <li>new or unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically; beginning to use phonics consistently</li> <li>includes some punctuation (often applied inconsistently); shows some sense of written sentences</li> <li><b>legible</b>, although parts may be difficult to read; spaces between most words</li> </ul>

### What are **simple sentences and patterns**?

Simple sentences contain one main idea or action. For example, *The wolf howled*. In early writing, children often write repeated **simple sentences and patterns** such as:

*I like wolves.*

*The wolf howled.*

*Wolves are nice.*

or

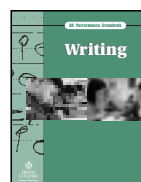
*I like grey wolves.*

*I like white wolves.*

*I like wolves.*

### What is **conventional spelling** for this grade level?

Children are expected to gradually build a collection of familiar words that they can spell correctly most of the time or seek a resource to help them spell it (e.g., sound it out, personal dictionary, word posters).



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students received the sentence frame “A friend is...” and wrote about personal experiences with friends.

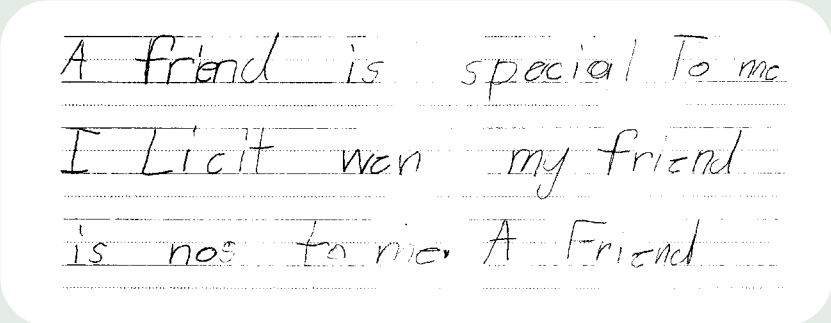
Teacher’s Observations

The student makes personal connections to friends. The writing is readable and makes sense.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 1 by March-April of the school year.

**Simple sentences and patterns** – The sentences and ideas in the writing are related to each other.



**Spelling** – The writer spells most familiar words.

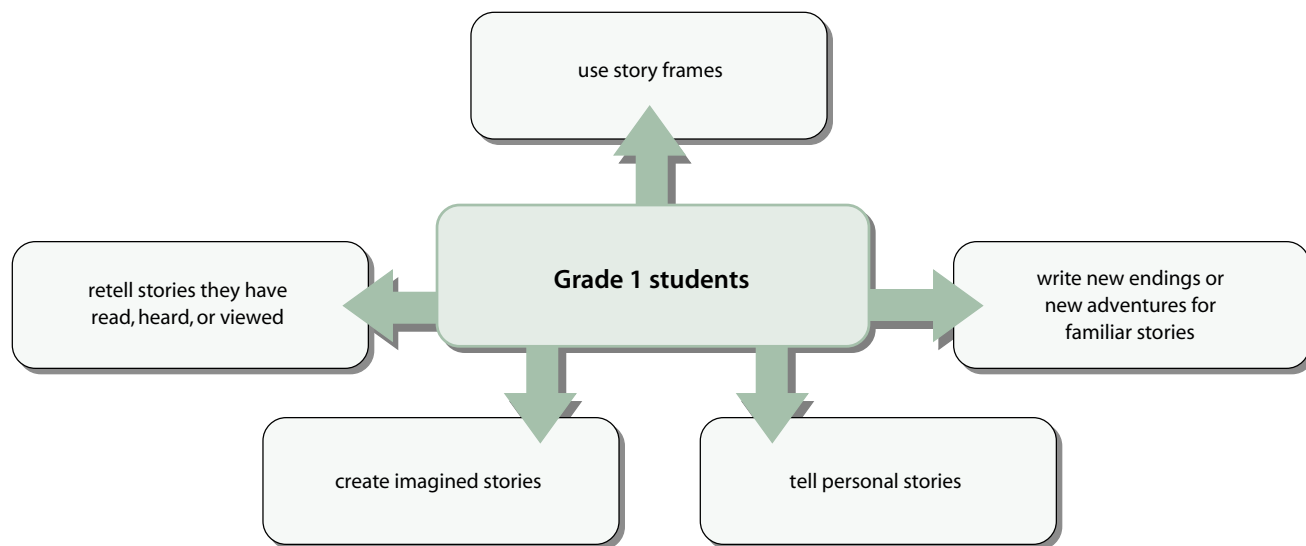
**Conversational language** – The language in the writing is like talk.

**TRANSCRIPT**  
A friend is special To me I Licit wen my friend is nos to me. A Friend is nice To me. A friend Play’s wiTh me. A fricnd Toss secrets aBouT Me. I Like my Friend my Friend is Angie I Like Angie nye is nos To me. my oThre Friend is Tara nye is verey nos. I Like mrs Bain.

**Legibility** – There are spaces between words; the writing includes both capitals and small letters, making it easy to read.

# Grade 1: Writing Stories

Grade 1 students often enjoy writing stories. Their stories are usually like those they have read or heard.



Early in Grade 1, children use pictures to tell their stories. As they develop fluency in writing, they increase the number of written words in their stories.

Writers in Grade 1 begin to experiment with “story language” and add some descriptive words. With support, they begin to add ideas to make the story easier to understand or more interesting.



## Quick Scale: Grade 1 Writing Stories

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The story may consist of a string of letters or be dictated for someone else to write down. The student needs a great deal of help.</i>	<i>The story is recognizable as conventional writing and has some elements of a story. The student often needs some help.</i>	<i>The story is readable and makes sense. The student is able to write independently with occasional help.</i>	<i>The story has some description and detail. The student is able to write independently.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> • ideas and information • details	• may be able to “ <b>read</b> ” <b>own writing</b> , but meaning often changes each time	• often retells another story • recognizable story situation • little development, few details	• some <b>individuality</b> • begins with characters and situation • has a problem and solution; few details	• some <b>individuality</b> • begins with characters and situation • has a problem and related solution; details add “colour”
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity and variety of language • description	• simple words • when “reading” or dictating, may be one <b>long, rambling sentence</b> or a series of short, stilted sentences	• conversational • repeats simple patterns, favourite words	• mostly conversational; may include some <b>story language</b> • repeats simple patterns; some simple description	• takes risks, experiments; shows awareness of the effects of interesting language • often has dialogue, description
<b>FORM</b> • beginning, middle, end • sequence	• usually a drawing with a <b>string of letters</b> or one or two dictated sentences	• may be very brief • string of loosely related <b>events</b> — mostly “middle” • uses <i>and</i> to connect ideas • drawing may tell much of the story	• includes beginning, middle, and end • most <b>events</b> are in logical sequence • repeats the same connecting words • writing can stand alone	• includes beginning, middle, and end • <b>events</b> are in logical sequence • uses a variety of connecting words • writing can stand alone
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • capitals and small letters • <b>spelling</b> • <b>use of phonics</b> • punctuation • spacing • legibility	• strings of capital letters • may use correct <b>initial consonant</b> • not yet able to use phonics • no punctuation • may be copied or dictated to another person	• mostly capital letters • some words spelled conventionally • many words <b>spelled phonetically</b> • may experiment with punctuation • parts are legible	• both capitals and small letters • spells many familiar words correctly • uses phonics to spell new words • some punctuation • legible	• uses both capitals and small letters • most familiar words spelled conventionally • phonics and word patterns used to solve spelling problems • generally written in sentences; uses punctuation • legible

## Grade 1 Rating Scale for Writing Stories (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in story writing tasks by March–April of Grade 1 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The story may consist of a string of letters or be dictated to someone else to write down. The student needs a great deal of help.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may be able to “<b>read</b>” <b>own writing</b>, but meaning often changes with subsequent readings</li> <li>drawing often provides most of the meaning</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity and variety of language</li> <li>description</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple words</li> <li>when “reading” his or her writing or dictating, may create one <b>long, rambling sentence</b> or a series of short, stilted sentences</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning, middle, end</li> <li>sequence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>often a drawing, labelled by a <b>string of letters</b> or with one or two sentences that have been dictated to another person</li> <li>may not resemble a story</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>capital and small letters</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>use of phonics</li> <li><b>punctuation</b></li> <li>spacing</li> <li>legibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>writes in strings of capital letters without spaces; single letters may represent words</li> <li>may show correct <b>initial consonant</b> for an intended word</li> <li>not yet able to use sound-symbol relationships (phonics)</li> <li>no punctuation</li> <li>may be copied or dictated to another person</li> </ul>

What is meant by being able to **read own writing**?

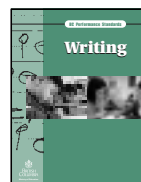
**Reading your own writing** means that when the child tells what they have written, they will recall the same wording each time, rather than making up a new story from the same picture.

What is a **long, rambling sentence**?

A **long, rambling sentence** is one with many ideas connected together, usually with *and* (e.g., “This me on my bike and it’s red and I got a new bike”).

What is an **initial consonant**?

The **initial consonant** is the beginning sound of a word.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

## NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote stories based on familiar stories.

### Teacher's Observations

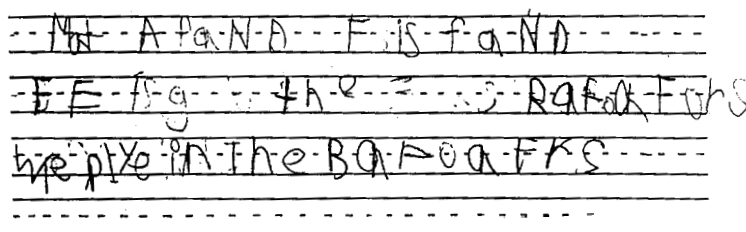
The writing consists of a string of letters.

#### Student Sample

The example shows part of the student's original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 1 by March-April of the school year.

##### "Read" own writing

— The student had difficulty reading what they wrote and changed the meaning of parts of it several times.



##### Use of

conventions – The writer did not use any punctuation.

##### String of letters

— The writing is a string of letters. The writer uses the correct initial consonant for intended words in some places.

##### TRANSCRIPT

Mn A faND F, is fa ND F E is g the Rafooh Fors we pIYe inTheBa  
r oa Fks



## Grade 1 Rating Scale for Writing Stories (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in story writing tasks by March–April of Grade 1 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The story is readable and makes sense. The student is able to write independently with occasional help.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some evidence of <b>individuality</b></li> <li>identifies characters and situation at the beginning of the story</li> <li>includes a problem and solution (solution may be abrupt)</li> <li>few supporting details</li> <li>may not consider audience</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity and variety of language</li> <li>description</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>primarily conversational language; may include some description and <b>story language</b> (e.g., <i>once upon a time</i>)</li> <li>repeats simple sentences and patterns</li> <li>may overuse pronouns, but the reader can usually tell to whom the pronouns refer</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning, middle, end</li> <li>sequence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes beginning, middle, and end; the written story makes sense standing alone</li> <li>most <b>events</b> are logically connected; may “wander” into a new problem</li> <li>repeats the same connecting words (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>capital and small letters</li> <li>spelling</li> <li><b>use of phonics</b></li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>spacing</li> <li>legibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes both capitals and small letters (may be inconsistent)</li> <li>many familiar words are spelled conventionally</li> <li>new or unfamiliar words are often <b>spelled phonetically</b>; beginning to use phonics consistently</li> <li>includes some punctuation (often applied inconsistently); shows some sense of written sentences</li> <li>legible, although parts may be difficult to read; spaces between most words</li> </ul>

What is meant by **individuality** in a written story?

Children display individuality at this level by using original ideas in their writing that do not appear to be taken from well-known stories, shows, videos, or ideas discussed in class.

What is **story language**?

**Storytelling language** contains words and phrases that are used more in fiction writing than in speaking or information writing. For example, “Once upon a time” and “happily ever after” are well-known story phrases.”

What does **spell phonetically** mean?

To **spell phonetically** is to spell using the sounds in the word and the letter or letters that represent them. Young writers cannot rely totally on this spelling strategy, because many words have silent letters and odd letter-sound combinations (e.g., knife, little, phone, eight).



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote stories based on familiar stories.

Teacher’s Observations

The story is readable and makes sense. The student is beginning to take risks with language.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 1 by March-April of the school year.

Individuality –

The writing shows some evidence of **individuality** e.g., adding the Easter Bunny.

Oncs upon a time There was a little gerl she was going to pik some floers foere her mom she fawd some floers but when she got there she saw The Ester bunny They pikt a lot uf floere They

Story events –

Most **events** are logically connected, but there is no story problem.

Story language

– The writing includes some description and **story language** (e.g., “once upon a time”).

TRANSCRIPT

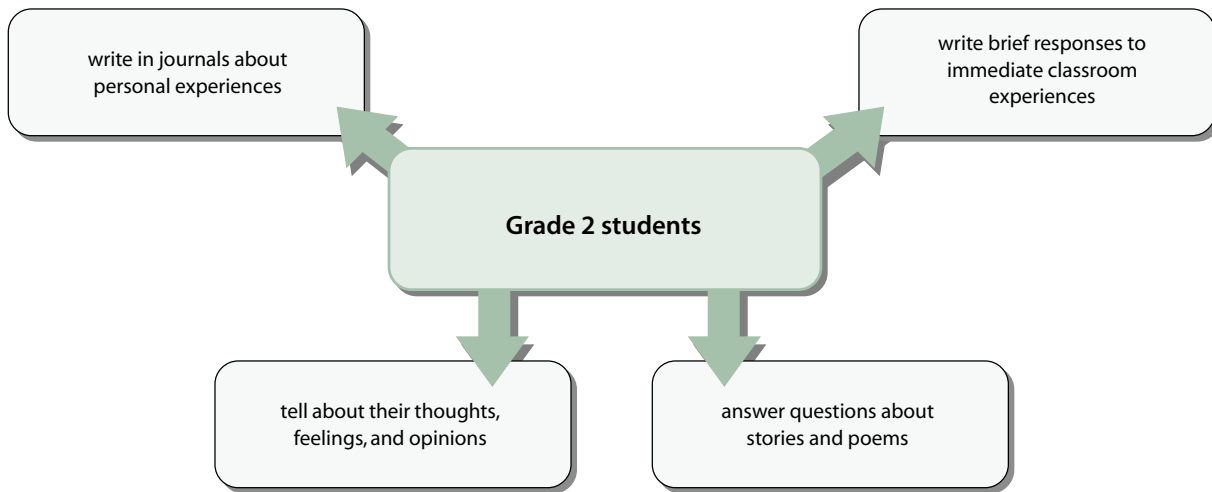
Oncs upon a time There was a little gerl she was going to pik some floers foere her mom she fawd some floers but when she got there she saw The Ester bunny They pikt a lot uf floere They hopt all The way home when They got home her Mom was amasde that she brot The Ester bunny home

Use of conventions –

New or unfamiliar words are spelled **phonetically** (e.g., hopt for hopped); the story is legible; there are spaces between the words.

## Grade 2: Personal, Impromptu Writing

Students are often asked to write about their thoughts and feelings and their own experiences.



In Grade 2, students do not usually make corrections (edit and revise). Still, they are expected to follow the grammar, punctuation, and spelling rules they have learned.



## Quick Scale: Grade 2 Personal, Impromptu Writing

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year.

Personal, impromptu writing is usually expected to be checked for errors but not revised or edited.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing may be an attempt to recount experiences or ideas, but problems with logic, organization, and conventions obscure meaning. Often very short.</i>	<i>The writing offers some logical ideas and reactions, but connections are not always clear. May be difficult to follow in places.</i>	<i>The writing is clear and easy to follow. It offers a series of loosely connected ideas and experiences with some detail.</i>	<i>The writing has a clear topic and focus, with related supporting details, reasons, or examples.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>topic may be hard to determine</li> <li>often <b>very short</b></li> <li><b>little logical detail</b> or description</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some connections to experiences, dislikes, likes</li> <li>offers some ideas and opinions</li> <li>some details; often irrelevant or repetitious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>makes connections to personal experiences, likes, and dislikes</li> <li>a series of loosely related ideas and opinions</li> <li>some <b>relevant details</b> or examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>offers opinions and observations with some development</li> <li>sense of purpose; ideas are related and often focus on a central theme</li> <li><b>relevant details</b>, reasons, or examples</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, <b>variety</b>, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is often unclear; may make errors in word choice</li> <li>relies on short, simple <b>sentence frames</b> that have been provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple, basic language; often repetitive</li> <li>tends to rely on short, simple sentences or one or more long, rambling sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>conversational language</b>; may include some description</li> <li>some <b>variety in sentence length</b>; often short and abrupt; some long and run-on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple descriptive language; some variety</li> <li>beginning to show some control of sentence structure; some <b>variety in length</b> and pattern</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning</li> <li>sequence</li> <li><b>connecting words</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>topic is not clear</li> <li>sequence is illogical</li> <li>omits <b>connecting words</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>often has no beginning (starts in the middle)</li> <li>may ramble without clear sequence or connections</li> <li>seldom uses <b>connecting words</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opening sentence may signal the topic</li> <li>ideas are loosely connected, often by time (e.g., same day)</li> <li>repeats a few simple <b>connecting words</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a title or opening sentence signals the topic (or time period—e.g., “yesterday”)</li> <li>logically sequenced and connected</li> <li>beginning to use a variety of <b>connecting words</b></li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li><b>spelling</b></li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>errors</b> make the writing difficult to read</li> <li>not written in sentences</li> <li>may omit letters and sounds</li> <li>often omits punctuation and capital letters or uses them inconsistently</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns and verbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent <b>errors</b> may interfere with meaning in places</li> <li>some complete sentences</li> <li>frequent <b>spelling</b> errors (but all sounds are represented)</li> <li>inconsistent use of capitals and punctuation</li> <li>some errors in pronouns and verbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>several <b>errors</b>, but these do not obscure meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete</li> <li>most <b>common words</b> are <b>spelled</b> correctly</li> <li>occasional errors in end punctuation; uses capital letters for names, places, first word in sentence</li> <li>most pronouns and verb forms are correct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include <b>errors</b> (particularly in more complex language); these do not affect meaning</li> <li>written in complete sentences</li> <li>most <b>spelling</b> is correct</li> <li>uses capital letters and end punctuation correctly</li> <li>uses correct pronouns and verb forms; may make occasional errors</li> </ul>

## Grade 2 Rating Scale for Personal, Impromptu Writing

### (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in personal, impromptu writing tasks by March–April of Grade 2 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing may be an attempt to recount experiences or ideas, but problems with logic, organization, and conventions obscure meaning. Often very short.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>topic may be hard to determine</li> <li>often <u>very short</u></li> <li><u>little logical detail</u> or description</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is often unclear; may make errors in word choice</li> <li>may rely on short, simple <u>sentence frames</u> that have been provided by the teacher</li> <li>uses pronouns inappropriately, often shifting from “I” to “he/she,” leaving the reader confused</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning</li> <li>sequence</li> <li><u>connecting words</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>topic is not clear</li> <li>sequence is illogical; sentences and ideas appear to be random and unrelated</li> <li>does not use <u>connecting words</u></li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repeated <u>serious errors</u> in basic language may make all or part of the writing difficult to read</li> <li>not written in sentences; may be one long string of words and ideas or may incorporate several fragments</li> <li>frequent serious spelling errors in basic vocabulary; some words may be difficult to figure out (may omit letters and sounds)</li> <li>often omits punctuation and capital letters or uses them inappropriately and inconsistently</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns and verb endings (e.g., “The dogs is barking.”)</li> </ul>

What is meant by very short?

At this level, many students can write stories of about one page in length. Stories that are less than half a page can be considered very short.

What is meant by little logical detail?

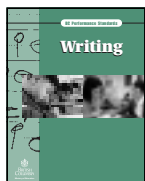
If a piece of writing shows little logical detail, it contains irrelevant details. Irrelevant details are those which don’t relate to the topic. For example, if a child writes a journal entry about their birthday party, details that have nothing to do with their birthday or the party would be considered “irrelevant” details.

What are sentence frames?

Sentence frames are sentences the teacher provides that have blanks for the student to fill in. For example, *Spiders like to eat \_\_\_\_\_*.

What is meant by serious errors?

If a child repeatedly cannot match letters and sounds to spell words or if repeated errors in written work make it difficult to read or understand, these would be considered serious errors.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote about things they do with their families.

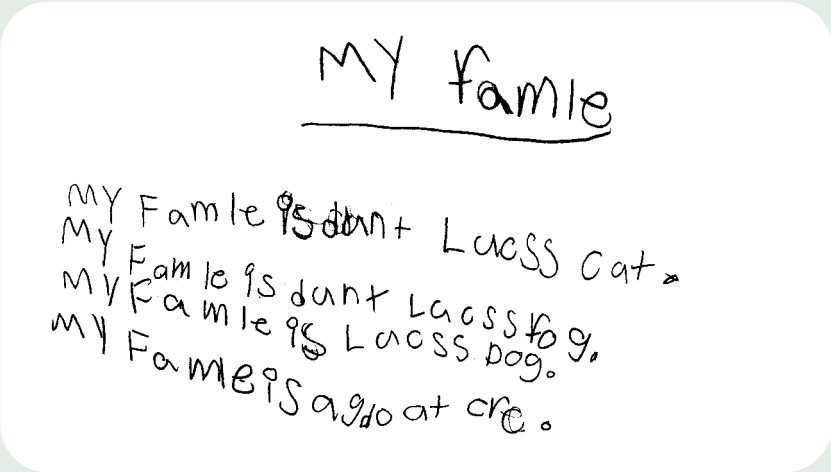
Teacher’s Observations

The teacher provided the student with the sentence frame “My family is...” to support the student’s attempt at writing.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 2 by March-April of the school year.

**Very short** – The student had difficulty writing more than a few words in each sentence.



**Connecting words** – The student relied on the use of a sentence frame and made no attempt to connect the ideas using **connecting words** (e.g., and, or, because).

**Relevant details** – **Relevant details** are ideas that tell more about the topic. In this example, “My Family,” the teacher noted that many details were illogical (did not make sense).

**TRANSCRIPT:**

**MY famle**

MY Famle is dunt LucSS cat.  
MY Famle is dunt LucSS fog.  
MY Famle is LucSS Dog.  
MY Famle is a gdo at crc.  
MY Famle is a grod famle.  
MY Famle is a tcSS grcDog.  
MY Famle is a gtr bdrisagahcE.  
MY Famle is a gdo  
MY DaDDY. is a gdo hce  
MYFamle is a fe MLoog.  
MYFamle is a dt LucSS.cat.  
MY Famle is a Fem mlda.  
MY Famle. is a gogo

**Use of conventions** – Problems with conventions make it difficult to figure out the meaning; the writing has frequent **serious errors** in basic vocabulary.

# Grade 2 Rating Scale for Personal, Impromptu Writing

## (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in personal, impromptu writing tasks by March–April of Grade 2 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is clear and easy to follow. It offers a series of loosely connected ideas and experiences with some detail.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>use of detail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>makes connections to personal experiences (usually recent events), likes, and dislikes</li> <li>generally offers a series of loosely related ideas and opinions (rather than developing one central idea)</li> <li>includes some relevant details or examples</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, <b>variety</b>, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>conversational language</b>: may include some description (often vague—e.g., <i>nice</i>, <i>cool</i>—and repetitive)</li> <li>some <b>variety in sentence length</b>; sentences are often short and abrupt; sometimes long and run-on</li> <li>uses pronouns frequently; these sometimes become confusing</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning</li> <li>sequence</li> <li><b>connecting words</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the opening sentence may signal the topic</li> <li>ideas are loosely connected, often by time (e.g., they all happened on the same day), but not clearly focused</li> <li>tends to repeat a few simple <b>connecting words</b> (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>, <i>so</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li><b>spelling</b></li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes several errors, but these do not obscure the intended meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete</li> <li>most <b>common words</b> are spelled correctly</li> <li>may include occasional errors in end punctuation (i.e., periods, question marks, exclamation marks); uses capital letters for names, places, first word in sentence (may capitalize some words unnecessarily)</li> <li>most basic pronouns and verb endings are correct; makes some errors (e.g., “She maked a cake.”)</li> </ul>

### What is

### **conversational language?**

**Conversational language** is typical of how people talk to each other and is often vague (e.g., *nice*, *cool*). It is not always appropriate or formal enough for story writing. For example, “The three bears went for a nice walk. They saw some cool berries”. As writers develop and build word knowledge, they rely less on conversational language to carry their stories.

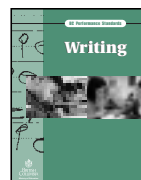
### What **connecting**

### **words** do children use at this level?

Beginning writers use simple connecting words like *but* and *soon*. As their skills increase, they begin to experiment with more sophisticated **connecting words**, such as *meanwhile*, *finally*, *after a while*, and *a long time ago*.

### What are **common words** at this level?

Most children in Grade 2 have a command of **commonly used words** with simple, straightforward meanings (e.g., *happy*, *pretty*, *went*, *saw*, *mad*, *sad*, *little*). It is expected that children at this level should also be able to use and spell commonly used words.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards



## FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote about things they do with their families.

### Teacher's Observations

The writing is clear and easy to follow. There is a series of connected ideas and experiences with some detail.

### Student Sample

The example shows part of the student's original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 2 by March-April of the school year.

#### Conversational

language – The writing is conversational and informal (e.g., “me and my mom”).

#### Sentence

variety – The writing has some variety in sentence length; the writing is mostly in sentences.

My famliy likes to go  
for bike rides on the dike.  
Me and my dad like to  
ride our dirt bikes. Me and  
my mom like to go to moves.  
Me and my sister like to play  
outside. And I like to read. This  
Summen me my Mom my Dad my  
Sister my Grandma and Grandpa  
mite go to Disne Land.

#### Connecting

words – The writer tends to use few connecting words.

#### Common words

– Most common words are used and spelled correctly.

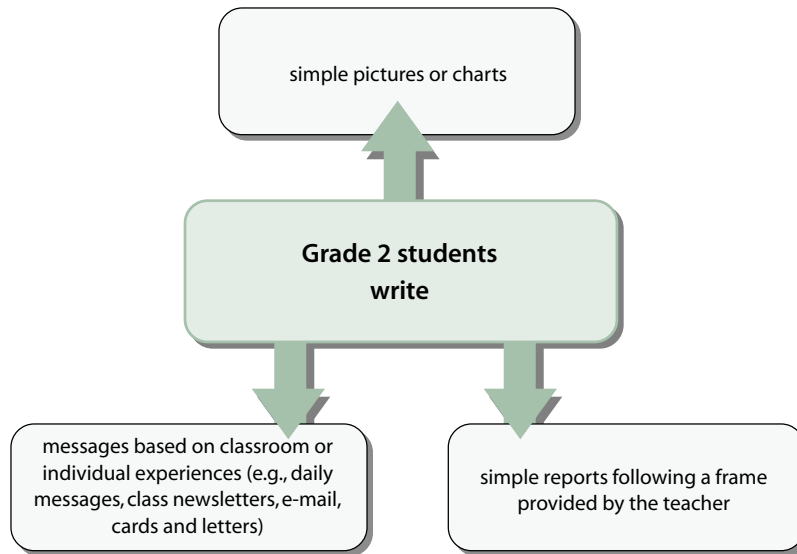
#### TRANSCRIPT:

My famliy likes to go for bike rides on the dike. Me and my dad like to ride our dirt bikes. Me and my mom like to go to moves. Me and my sister like to play outside. And I like to read. This summer me and my Mom my Dad my Sister my Grandma and Grandpa mite go to Disne Land.



# Grade 2: Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

In Grade 2, students collect and organize information to create short reports, usually in a format provided by the teacher.



The child's classmates and teachers are the main audience (readers) for this type of writing. Writing for a wide range of readers, including teachers, classmates, family and community members, pen pals, and e-pals, helps children build their writing skills.

In Grade 2, students do not usually check over their work and make corrections (edit and revise) independently. Still, they are expected to follow the grammar, punctuation, and spelling rules they have learned.



## Quick Scale: Grade 2 Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Writing to communicate ideas and information at this level is expected to involve extensive pre-writing and planning and to be checked carefully for conventions (e.g., spelling, periods). However, students at this age are not expected to do extensive revision and rewriting.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is hard to understand. The student is unable to provide clear written information without intensive, ongoing help.</i>	<i>The writing offers some accurate information (usually from class discussion); parts are illogical or inaccurate and may be difficult to follow.</i>	<i>The writing is clear, mostly in the student's own words; provides accurate information on simple topics and procedures. Includes some detail.</i>	<i>The writing is purposeful; provides accurate information with some specific detail on simple topics and procedures. Shows a sense of control.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><b>use of detail</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>little or no accurate information (unless copied)</li> <li>often very short; <b>omits required parts</b></li> <li>little logical <b>detail</b> or description</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some accurate information, usually from discussions and guidance</li> <li>has some required parts</li> <li>some <b>details</b>; often irrelevant or repetitious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accurate basic information, often based on discussions and guidance</li> <li>generally includes all required parts; these are often very basic</li> <li>some <b>specific, relevant details</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accurate, logical information; may add parts not discussed in class</li> <li>includes all required parts; often extra detail</li> <li>relevant explanations, examples, or <b>details</b></li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is often unclear; may make errors in word choice</li> <li>relies on short sentence <b>frames</b> that have been provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple, basic language; often repetitive</li> <li>tends to rely on short, simple sentences or one or more long, rambling sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conversational language; may include some description (often vague and repetitive)</li> <li>some <b>variety in sentence length</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple descriptive language; some attempts to be specific or exact</li> <li>beginning to show some control and <b>variety in sentences</b></li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>required features</b></li> <li>beginning</li> <li><b>sequence</b></li> <li>connecting words</li> <li>visual features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not resemble the <b>intended form</b></li> <li>topic often unclear</li> <li><b>sequence</b> is illogical</li> <li>few, if any, connecting words</li> <li>visual features are omitted, inaccurate, or unrelated to the topic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes some <b>required features</b>, but may have difficulty with the <b>form</b> (e.g., recipe may be a paragraph)</li> <li>begins in the middle</li> <li>rambles; little <b>sequence</b></li> <li>seldom uses connecting words</li> <li>visual features may be incomplete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some <b>awareness of form</b> (e.g., instructions look like instructions); may omit key features</li> <li>title signals the topic</li> <li><b>logical sequence</b>; may lapse in places</li> <li>repeats a few simple connecting words</li> <li>visual features are relevant, may be unclear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tries to use basic conventions of form (e.g., instructions look like instructions)</li> <li>a title signals the topic; usually has a conclusion</li> <li><b>logical sequence</b></li> <li>variety of connecting words</li> <li>visual features are clear and relevant</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repeated serious errors make the writing difficult to read</li> <li>not written in sentences</li> <li>may omit letters and sounds</li> <li>often omits punctuation and capital letters or uses them inconsistently</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns and verbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent errors may interfere with meaning in places</li> <li>some complete sentences</li> <li>frequent spelling errors (but all sounds are represented)</li> <li>inconsistent use of capitals and punctuation</li> <li>some errors in pronouns and verbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>several errors, but these do not obscure meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete</li> <li>most common words are spelled correctly</li> <li>occasional errors in end punctuation; uses capital letters for names, places, first word in sentence</li> <li>most pronouns and verb forms are correct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include errors (particularly in more complex language); these do not affect meaning</li> <li>written in complete sentences</li> <li>most spelling is correct</li> <li>uses capital letters and end punctuation correctly</li> <li>uses correct pronouns and verb forms; may make occasional errors</li> </ul>

## Grade 2 Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in writing to communicate ideas and information by March-April of Grade 2 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is hard to understand. The student is unable to provide clear written information without intensive, ongoing help.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>use of detail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>little or no accurate information (unless copied)</li> <li>often very short; <b>omits many required parts</b></li> <li>little logical detail or description</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is often unclear; may make errors in word choice</li> <li>may rely on short, simple sentence <b>frames</b> that have been provided by the teacher</li> <li>uses pronouns inappropriately, often shifting from "I" to "he/she," leaving the reader confused</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>required features</li> <li>beginning</li> <li>sequence</li> <li>connecting words</li> <li>visual features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>often does not resemble the <b>intended form</b></li> <li>topic is not clear</li> <li>sequence is illogical; sentences and ideas appear to be random and unrelated</li> <li>does not use connecting words</li> <li>visual features (e.g., illustrations, diagrams) are omitted, inaccurate, or unrelated to the topic</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repeated serious errors in basic language may make all or part of the writing difficult to read</li> <li>not written in sentences; may be one long string of words and ideas or may incorporate several fragments</li> <li>frequent serious spelling errors in basic vocabulary; some words may be difficult to figure out (may omit letters and sounds)</li> <li>often omits punctuation and capital letters or uses them inappropriately and inconsistently</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns and verb endings (e.g., "The dogs is barking.")</li> </ul>

### What is meant by **omits required parts**?

Teachers often outline exactly what is required in a piece of informational writing. For example, a letter needs the date, a greeting, a body, a closing, and a signature. These are the **required parts** for letter writing. Reports have different required parts (e.g., title, main idea, conclusion).

### What is a **frame**?

Children at this level learn to write by using **frames** or templates. These devices provide help for learning the rules of writing. The teacher presents examples of the frame as a model and then asks students to write their own (e.g., Sample Report Frame – see sample on page 31).

### What is meant by the **intended form**?

The type of writing is its **intended form** (e.g., a letter, a journal entry, a book report, or a report on a specific topic). Different forms have certain requirements.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students used a research frame provided by the teacher to research and write about a Canadian animal of their choice.

Teacher’s Observations

The student was unable to provide any written information. The teacher scribed (wrote down what the student dictated) the section on habitat, and the student completed one drawing.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 2 by March-April of the school year.

**Omits required parts** – The student left out part of the task (e.g., classify the animal, describe its appearance, tell about its diet and how it moves, communicates, and protects itself).

**Intended form** – The research frame, provided by the teacher, is the **intended form**. Students use this as a way to present their information. This student’s work does not complete the research frame provided by the teacher.

**SAMPLEE RESEARCH FRAME**

**Friends & Enemies**  
(Who helps my animal? Who hurts it?)  
Predator or Prey, Conservation

ti

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

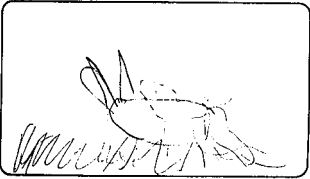
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Wolves

An Animal Research Project  
by

\_\_\_\_\_



A diagram of a Wolf

**TRANSCRIPT:**

**Friends & Enemies (Who helps my animal? Who hurts it?) Predator or Prey, Conservation**

—ti

**Interesting Facts & Special Characteristics**  
**(What is important about this animal?)**

(blank - no response)

**A diagram of a**

Wolf

**Classification (What kind of animal is it?)**

(blank - no response)

**Appearance (What does it look like?)**

(blank - no response)

**Life Cycle and Offspring (how does it grow and change?)**

(blank - no response)

**Habitat (Where does it live?)**

Timber wolves live in the wilderness.  
Timber wolves live on the prairies. Timber wolves live in forests.  
Timber wolves live in dens.

## Grade 2 Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in writing to communicate ideas and information by March–April of Grade 2 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is clear, mostly written in the student's own words, and provides accurate information on simple topics and procedures. Includes some detail.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides accurate basic information or observations, often based on class discussions and teacher guidance</li> <li>generally includes all required parts (i.e., follows instructions or frame provided by the teacher); these are often very basic</li> <li>includes some specific <u>details</u>; these usually relate to concrete features such as size or colour</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conversational language; may include some description (often vague—e.g., <i>nice</i>, <i>cool</i>—and repetitive)</li> <li>some <u>variety in sentence length</u>; sentences are often short and abrupt; sometimes long and run-on</li> <li>uses pronouns frequently; these sometimes become confusing</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>required features</u></li> <li>beginning</li> <li><u>sequence</u></li> <li>connecting words</li> <li>visual features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning to show <u>awareness of form</u> (e.g., instructions look like instructions); may omit key <u>features</u> (e.g., fail to number instructions)</li> <li>a title or opening sentence signals the topic; may omit conclusion</li> <li>ideas are presented in <u>logical sequence</u> (often following a template or frame provided by the teacher); may lapse in places</li> <li>tends to repeat a few simple connecting words (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>, <i>so</i>)</li> <li>visual features (e.g., diagrams, illustrations) are connected to the written information but often hard to interpret</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes several errors, but these do not obscure the intended meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete</li> <li>most common words are spelled correctly</li> <li>may include occasional errors in end punctuation (i.e., periods, question marks, exclamation marks); uses capital letters for names, places, first word in sentence (may capitalize some words unnecessarily)</li> <li>most basic pronouns and verb endings are correct; makes some errors (e.g., “She maked a cake.”)</li> </ul>

What is meant by variety in sentence length?

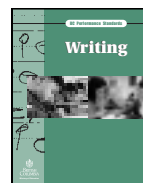
Sentence length refers to the number of words in a sentence. Writing that uses sentences of differing lengths is more interesting to read. For example, *There are dogs of all sizes, from very small to big. Dogs like to play with balls.*

What is meant by an awareness of form?

Form refers to the structure of a piece of writing. Different types of writing use different forms (e.g., a letter, a book report, a report on a specific topic). As young writers develop, they become increasingly aware of the different forms that writing can take. Eventually they understand the rules for each form and know which form to use for various tasks.

What is meant by logical sequence?

Logically sequenced writing has a clear beginning, middle, and end that flow together smoothly. Ideas and details clearly tell about the topic.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students used a research frame provided by the teacher to research and write about a Canadian animal of their choice.

Teacher’s Observations

The writing is clear and mostly written in the student’s own words.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 2 by March-April of the school year.

**Required features** – The writing includes most required parts (the student provided information on every category except for classification, appearance, and habitat).

**Details** – The writer provides accurate basic information on the topic and includes **specific, relevant details** (e.g., tail 30 cm long, work as a team).

**Friends & Enemies**  
(Who helps my animal? Who hurts it?)  
Predator or Prey, Conservation  
a Human is a  
enemie of Bever. so  
is beara. and wolves.  
and coyotes. and lynxes.  
and wolverine.

**Interesting Facts & Special Characteristics**  
(What is important about this animal?)  
tails 30 cm long. have  
strong flat tails. work  
as a team. are away  
Busy build dams

**Variety in sentence length** – The writer uses some variety in sentence length and generally writes in complete sentences.

TRANSCRIPT:

**Friends & Enemies (Who helps my animal? Who hurts it?) Predator or Prey, Conservation**  
a Human is a enemie of Bever. so is bears. and wolves. and coyotes. and lynxes. and wolverine.  
**Interesting Facts & Special Characteristics (What is important about this animal?)**  
tails 30 cm long. have strong flat tails. work as a team. are away Busy build dams  
**A diagram of a**  
Bever

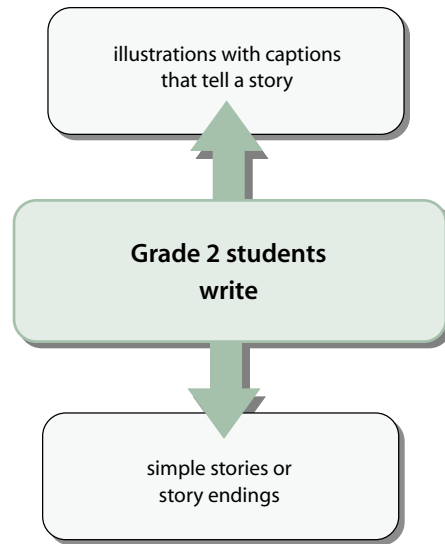
**Classification (What kind of animal is it?)**  
(blank - no response)  
**Appearance (What does it look like?)**  
(blank - no response)  
**Life Cycle and Offspring (how does it grow and change?)**  
babies of a bever are called kits or pup. Kits drink milk from ther mother. kits leave home when they are 2 years old. bevers Have 2 to 4 babies in spring.  
**Habitat (Where does it live?)**  
(blank - no response)

**Awareness of form** – The teacher reported that the writer demonstrates a beginning awareness of how to use the frame provided.

**Logical sequence** – The writer follows the research frame and presents ideas in a logical sequence (e.g., an order that makes sense).

# Grade 2: Writing Stories

In Grade 2, students most often write stories about personal (their own) experiences.



In Grade 2, students do not usually check over their work and make corrections (edit and revise). Still, they are expected to follow the grammar, punctuation, and spelling rules they have learned.





## Quick Scale: Grade 2 Writing Stories

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Stories at this level are expected to involve extensive pre-writing and planning and to be checked carefully for conventions (e.g., spelling, periods). However, students at this age are not expected to do extensive revision and rewriting.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>May attempt to tell a story, but problems with logic, organization, and conventions obscure meaning. May be very short.</i>	<i>Clearly sets out to tell a story. Beginning is usually stronger than middle, and ending may be illogical or missing. Little story language.</i>	<i>The story has a beginning, middle, and end; easy to follow. Includes most elements (setting, characters, problem, solution) and some story language.</i>	<i>The story develops logically from a problem to a solution. Consistently uses story language and shows a sense of individuality and control.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>use of detail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas or events are not logically connected</li> <li>little logical detail or description</li> <li>may not have a <b>story problem</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may retell a story they know</li> <li>includes some detail; may be confusing</li> <li>usually has a simple, concrete problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>modelled on stories the student knows</li> <li>many details loosely relate to <b>story problem</b></li> <li>usually includes a problem, but has trouble with <b>solution</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sense of individuality</li> <li>has supporting details</li> <li><b>story problems</b> are usually concrete and developed through action; <b>solution</b> is less developed</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is often unclear; may make errors in word choice</li> <li>relies on short, simple <b>sentence frames</b> that have been provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple, basic language; often repetitive</li> <li>tends to rely on short, simple sentences or one or more long, rambling sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>conversational</b>; some description and storytelling language</li> <li><b>some variety in sentences</b>; often short and abrupt; some long, run-on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>storytelling language; simple description; variety</li> <li>some control and variety in sentences</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>beginning, middle, end</b></li> <li>sequence, development</li> <li>characters, setting</li> <li>dialogue</li> <li>connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may be all middle</li> <li><b>little development</b> (may be <b>very short</b>); ideas are not <b>logically connected</b></li> <li>characters and setting are often not identified</li> <li>may have no dialogue</li> <li>does not use connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a beginning and middle; doesn't really "end"</li> <li>events may not <b>connect logically</b></li> <li>may name characters and setting with no description or context</li> <li>dialogue may have no quotation marks</li> <li>seldom uses connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a <b>beginning, middle, and end</b></li> <li>events are loosely connected; may be illogical in places</li> <li>usually identifies characters and problem at beginning</li> <li>often includes dialogue</li> <li>relies on a few simple connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>beginning</b> is well-developed; <b>middle</b> is logical; <b>end</b> may be abrupt</li> <li>events are <b>logically connected</b></li> <li>builds some context at the beginning</li> <li>uses dialogue; generally logical</li> <li>variety of simple connecting words</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repeated serious errors make the writing difficult to read</li> <li>not written in sentences</li> <li>may omit letters and sounds</li> <li>often omits punctuation and capital letters or uses them inconsistently</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns and verbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent errors may interfere with meaning in places</li> <li>some complete sentences</li> <li>frequent spelling errors (but all sounds are represented)</li> <li>inconsistent use of capitals and punctuation</li> <li>some errors in pronouns and verbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>several errors, but these do not obscure meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete</li> <li>most common words are spelled correctly</li> <li>occasional errors in end punctuation; uses capital letters for names, places, first word in sentence</li> <li>most pronouns and verb forms are correct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include errors (particularly in more complex language); these do not affect meaning</li> <li>written in complete sentences</li> <li>most spelling is correct</li> <li>uses capital letters and end punctuation correctly</li> <li>uses correct pronouns and verb forms; may make occasional errors</li> </ul>



# Grade 2 Rating Scale for Writing Stories

## (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in writing stories by March–April of Grade 2 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>May attempt to tell a story, but problems with logic, organization, and conventions obscure meaning. May be very short.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>use of detail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consists of ideas or events that are not logically connected into a story</li> <li>little logical detail or description</li> <li>may not have a <b>story problem</b></li> <li>often <b>very short</b></li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is often unclear; may make errors in word choice</li> <li>may rely on short, simple <b>sentence frames</b> that have been provided by the teacher</li> <li>uses pronouns inappropriately, often shifting from “I” to “he/she,” leaving the reader confused</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning, middle, end</li> <li>sequence</li> <li>characters</li> <li>dialogue</li> <li>connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may be all “middle”—a series of sentences without a clear beginning or end</li> <li><b>little development</b> (may be <b>very short</b>); ideas are not <b>logically connected</b></li> <li>characters and setting are often not identified</li> <li>may have no dialogue</li> <li>does not use connecting words</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repeated serious errors in basic language may make all or part of the writing difficult to read</li> <li>not written in sentences; may be one long string of words and ideas or may incorporate several fragments</li> <li>frequent serious spelling errors in basic vocabulary; some words may be difficult to figure out (may omit letters and sounds)</li> <li>often omits punctuation and capital letters or uses them inappropriately and inconsistently</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns and verb endings (e.g., “The dogs is barking.”)</li> </ul>

### What is meant by a **story problem**?

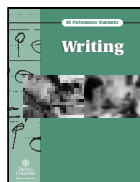
Most stories are organized around a **story problem**. The main character is faced with a dilemma or problem that needs to be resolved. Solving the problem carries the story forward. For example, in the popular series *The Berenstain Bears*, one of the central characters usually has a problem that is resolved by the end of the story (e.g., being too greedy, too selfish, too fearful).

### What is meant by **little development**?

At this level, many students are able to write stories of about one page in length. Stories that are less than half a page can be considered **very short** and usually have **little development** (e.g., no clear beginning or end, an abrupt ending with very little information about the ideas or characters, or ideas that don’t connect).

### What is meant by **logically connected**?

Ideas that are **logically connected** make sense to the reader. Young writers often put unconnected ideas into their stories. For example, “The twins went to the park and played on the swings. Then they had lunch. They went to a birthday party yesterday. They saw a dog at the park.”



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

## NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students chose a favourite story from their writing files to revise and edit.

### Teacher's Observations

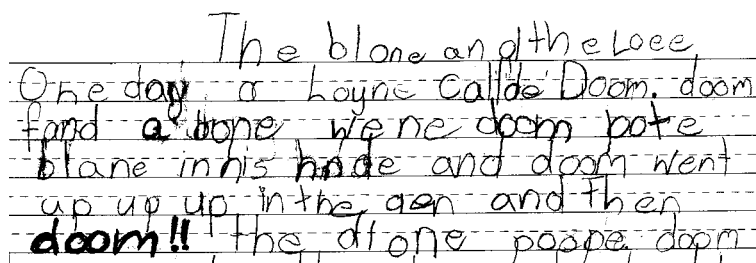
The student attempts to tell a story, but problems with logic, organization, and conventions make it very difficult to figure out. It is very short.

### Student Sample

The example shows part of the student's original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 2 by March-April of the school year.

#### Story problem –

The writing does not have a story problem. It consists of ideas that are not **logically connected** to the story.



#### Sentence frames –

The writer relies on short, simple sentence frames provided by the teacher.

#### Very short –

The writing is very short, and the language is unclear. The story has very little development, especially in the middle.

#### TRANSCRIPT:

The blone and the Loe One day a Loyne Calld Doom. doom fand a bone we ne doom pote blane in his hnde and doom went up up up in the den and then doom!! the d lone poope. doom was releg therste so he had to lete go of the dlone. Weny he lete go of the dlone he theod he wod fole in the woter a bred Cot him.

#### Conventions –

The writing has repeated serious errors, making it hard to read.

# Grade 2 Rating Scale for Writing Stories

## (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in writing stories by March–April of Grade 2 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The story has a beginning, middle, and end and is easy to follow. It includes most elements (setting, characters, problem, solution) and features some story language.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>use of detail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>often modelled on stories read, heard, or viewed (may combine elements of two or more stories)</li> <li>includes many details; these are often loosely related to the central story problem (unsorted detail)</li> <li>story usually includes a problem, but the writer may have difficulty with a <b>solution</b> and end abruptly</li> <li>often includes characters (real or imagined) and background information recently learned about; connection to the storyline is sometimes weak</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>conversational language</b>; may include some description (often vague—e.g., <i>nice, cool</i>—and repetitive) and storytelling language (e.g., “There once was....”)</li> <li><b>some variety in sentence length</b>; sentences are often short and abrupt; sometimes long and run-on</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>beginning, middle, end</b></li> <li>sequence</li> <li>characters</li> <li>dialogue</li> <li>connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses pronouns frequently; these sometimes become confusing</li> <li>has a <b>beginning, middle, and end</b>; end may be abrupt</li> <li>events are loosely connected; development may be illogical in places</li> <li>usually identifies the characters and problem at the beginning of the story, but provides little context</li> <li>often includes dialogue</li> <li>tends to repeat a few simple connecting words (e.g., <i>and, then, so</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes several errors, but these do not obscure the intended meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete</li> <li>most common words are spelled correctly</li> <li>may include occasional errors in end punctuation (i.e., periods, question marks, exclamation marks); uses capital letters for names, places, first word in sentence (may capitalize some words unnecessarily)</li> <li>most basic pronouns and verb endings are correct; makes some errors (e.g., “She maked a cake.”)</li> </ul>

What is meant by **solution** to the story?

A story problem or dilemma needs a **solution** (e.g., a character has lost their dog and wants to find it). Often, young children base their stories on events that are happening in their lives. Such stories may not include a solution to the problem.

What is **conversational language**?

**Conversational language** is how people talk to each other. It is often casual. For example, “The three bears went for a nice walk. They saw some cool berries.”

In story writing, what is the importance of the **beginning, middle, and end**?

The **beginning** of the story sets the scene, introduces the characters, and presents the story problem. The **middle** of the story is like the “filling” in a sandwich; it gives the writing depth (e.g., details, descriptions, and information). The **end** contains the solution to the story problem.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students chose a favourite story from their writing files to revise and edit.

Teacher’s Observations

This story has a beginning, middle, and end. It is easy to follow, includes story elements (e.g., characters, problems), and features some story language (e.g., *Once upon a time*). The student revised, edited, and published this story.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 2 by March-April of the school year.

**Solution to the story** – The story has a problem (to avoid being eaten by the cat), but the ending is abrupt (not developed).

Once upon a time, there were three mice. Their mother could not keep them, so she sent them out to seek their fortunes. By the way here is some advice for you, make sure you lock the doors and watch out for the big, bad cat. We will be careful, mother. The first mouse built his house out of straw and the second built his house out of sticks and the third built his house out of bricks

**Conversational language** – The story uses casual and every day language.

**Beginning, middle, and end** – The writer identifies the characters and problem at the **beginning** of the story. The **middle** of the story has well-connected events and ideas that fit the rest of the story and make sense. The **end** is abrupt.

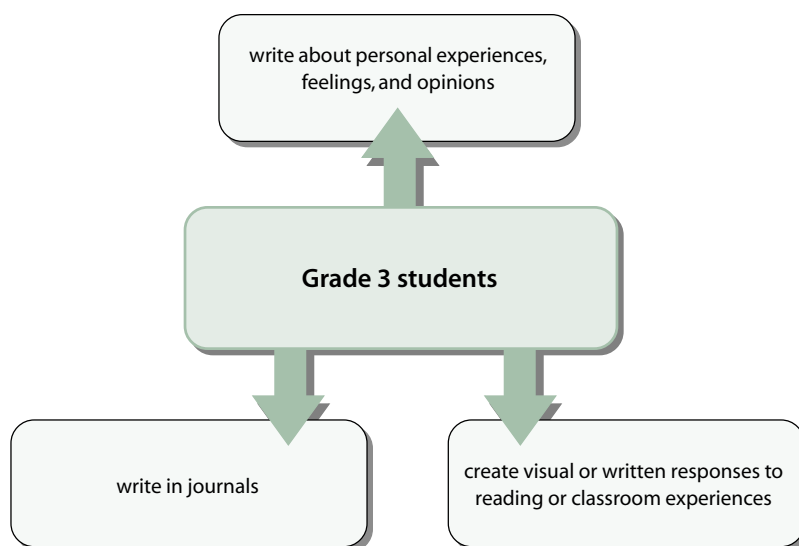
**TRANSCRIPT:**  
Once upon a time, there were three mice. Their mother could not keep them, so she sent them out to seek their fortunes. By the way here is some advice for you, make sure you lock the doors and watch out for the big, bad cat. We will be careful, mother. The first mouse built his house out of straw and the second built his house out of sticks and the third built his house out of bricks

**Sentence length** – The writing has some variety in sentence length; it is generally written in complete sentences.

One day the big, bad cat came to call on the first mouse. “Little mouse, little mouse let me come in!” said the cat. The mouse said, “Oh, no you can’t come in because you will eat me.” Cat scratched the straw house down and away ran little, mouse to second mouse’s house. Next the big, bad cat went over to second mouse’s house and banged on the door. He said, “Let me come in little mouse.” The mice said, “No, you can not come in.” The cat jumped on the house and broke it. The mice ran over to their brother’s house. The next day big, bad cat went to visit third mouse’s house. In a big voice cat said, “Let me come in or I will destroy your house. The mice got a hose and turned the water on full blast. Then they shouted together, 1, 2, 3 Blast! They drenched the cat with water. The cat ran home quickly and never came back to bother the mice again.

## Grade 3: Personal, Impromptu Writing

In Grade 3, students are often asked to write about their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about their own experiences or current events, books, or movies.



Students do not usually make corrections with personal, impromptu writing. Still, they are expected to follow the grammar, punctuation, and spelling rules they have learned.



## Quick Scale: Grade 3 Personal, Impromptu Writing

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Personal, impromptu writing is usually expected to be checked for errors but not revised or edited.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing offers few ideas, and these are often disjointed, illogical, and hard to understand. The student needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing presents loosely connected ideas; may be vague or hard to follow in places or flawed by frequent basic errors.</i>	<i>The writing is clear and easy to follow, with relevant and logical ideas about the topic or issue.</i>	<i>The writing flows smoothly, offers detail and elaboration, and shows some insight.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>often very brief—a statement of <u>opinion without support</u></li> <li>details may be irrelevant, <u>vague</u>, or inaccurate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opinion or reaction tends to be vague or unsupported</li> <li>relies on retelling or offering factual <u>details</u> without <u>explanation</u> or analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>connects</u> to opinions, experiences, feelings</li> <li>some <u>explanations</u>, <u>details</u>, examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>connects</u> to experiences and feelings; writer's perspective comes through</li> <li>supports and elaborates ideas; may make comparisons</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, <u>variety</u>, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic language</li> <li>sentences are often <u>long and rambling</u> or short and stilted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language may be <u>vague</u>, repetitive</li> <li>tends to rely on simple and compound sentences; may include run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is clear and <u>shows some variety</u></li> <li>some variety in sentence length and pattern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is clear and varied; some precision</li> <li>flows smoothly</li> <li>variety of sentence patterns and lengths</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opening</li> <li>organization and <u>sequence</u></li> <li>conclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may be very brief</li> <li>no introduction; tends to ramble</li> <li>repeats a few basic connecting words (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some <u>sequence</u>; connections among ideas may be unclear</li> <li>introduces topic, but often loses focus</li> <li>some transitions may be abrupt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>logically sequenced</u></li> <li>introduces and generally sticks to topic; conclusion may be abrupt</li> <li>variety of connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>logically sequenced</u> and connected</li> <li>clear beginning, middle, and end; sticks to topic</li> <li>smooth transitions</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>correct pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure often make the writing hard to understand</li> <li>capitals often omitted or misused</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic spelling and sentence punctuation is correct; errors do not interfere with meaning, although some parts may be hard to read</li> <li>may include run-on or incomplete sentences; may overuse pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure are generally correct; minor errors do not interfere with meaning</li> <li>may include errors with commas, quotation marks, or agreement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks with newly acquired or complex language</li> <li>may overuse some punctuation marks or make occasional errors in agreement</li> </ul>

# Grade 3 Rating Scale for Personal, Impromptu Writing

## (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in personal, impromptu writing tasks by March–April of Grade 3 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing offers few ideas, and these are often disjointed, illogical, and hard to understand. The student needs ongoing support.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>often very brief—a statement of <u>opinion without support</u></li> <li>little explanation; <u>details</u> may be irrelevant, <u>vague</u>, or inaccurate</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic, simple language</li> <li>may be a series of short, stilted sentences or one or more <u>long, rambling sentence</u></li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opening</li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li>conclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may be very brief</li> <li>may have no opening or introduction</li> <li>tends to ramble without clear sequence or connections</li> <li>repeats the same connecting words (e.g., <i>and, then</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>correct pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors make the writing hard to understand</li> <li>many incomplete or run-on sentences</li> <li>simple, familiar words may be misspelled</li> <li>capitals and periods often omitted or misused</li> <li>pronouns are often confusing</li> </ul>

### What is vague writing?

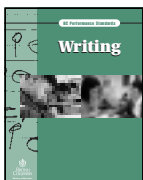
Student writing that is vague gives limited opinion and no support about a topic. For example, the student might tell about an event but include little information about what took place or how the writer felt about the event.

### What is a long, rambling sentence?

Students lacking writing experience may write long, rambling sentences (e.g., “The girl ran home and the girl told her dad and the girl was sad.”) A student with control may write “Marcie ran home and told her dad what had happened to the dog.”

### What are conventions of language?

The conventions of language include basic spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and grammar.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards



## NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote about a field trip to the Orpheum theatre.

### Teacher's Observations

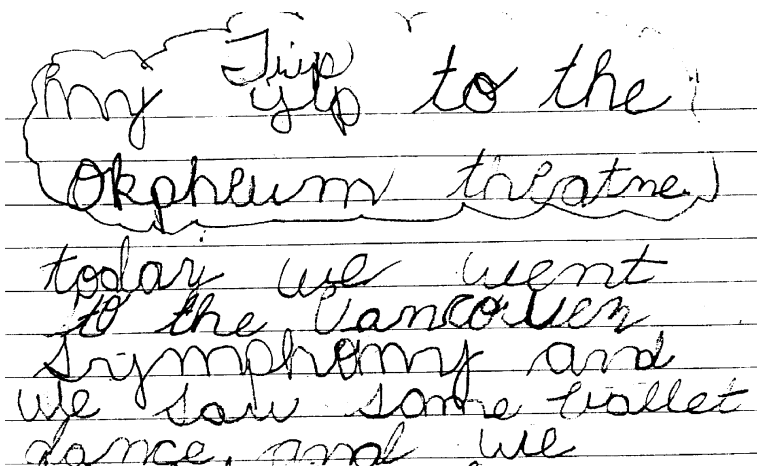
The student's writing is a string of activities joined with *and* ([a long, rambling sentence](#)).

### Student Sample

The example shows part of the student's original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 3 by March-April of the school year.

**Vague** – The child retells the event only and does not add any details.

**Opinions without support** – The child doesn't say what they thought, how they felt, or what they liked. Nor does the child tell why.



**Few Details** – The child gives no reasons for their favourite instrument and no descriptions of what they saw or heard.

**Use of conventions** – Some capitals are omitted or misused; frequent errors make the writing hard to understand.

#### TRANSCRIPT

#### My Trip to the Orpheum theatre

today we went to the Vancouver Symphomy and we saw some ballet dance and we heard the loomy teens. and we heard the simpсан and in the moode and my fauvoorot instmmont is the ——— and the ——— and a som that is in a movei.



## Grade 3 Rating Scale for Personal, Impromptu Writing

### (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in personal, impromptu writing tasks by March–April of Grade 3 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is clear and easy to follow, with relevant and logical ideas about the topic or issue.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>makes connections</u> to personal experiences, feelings, and opinions; may focus on retelling the experience rather than reacting or analyzing</li> <li>provides some explanations, <u>details</u>, and examples; may include irrelevant information in places</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, <u>variety</u>, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is clear and shows some <u>variety</u></li> <li>some <u>variety</u> in sentence length and pattern</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opening</li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li>conclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas are generally <u>logically sequenced</u>, although there may be some breaks; connections may not always be clear</li> <li>topic or issue is introduced in the beginning; the end may seem abrupt</li> <li>generally sticks to the topic; may wander occasionally</li> <li>uses a variety of connecting words</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>correct pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete</li> <li>most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes</li> <li>basic sentence punctuation is correct; the student may make errors when using commas or quotation marks</li> <li>most pronouns are clear and correct; may be some errors in agreement</li> </ul>

What is meant by makes connections to opinions, experiences, and feelings?

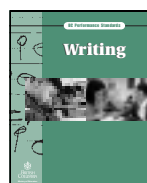
When a child sees how things are related, they are making connections. For example, if a child tells how he or she feels about a character or event in a story, they have made a connection with that character or event.

What does variety in language look like?

A child who writes using a variety of language and sentence structures can include details that give the reader very specific information — paint a vivid picture in the reader's mind. Their work is interesting to read. For example, "The cat's shadow could be seen in the doorway. The mouse's heart raced. Before he could make a sound the cat ran towards him." Rather than: "The cat could be seen in the doorway. The mouse was scared. The cat ran towards him. The mouse couldn't move."

What makes writing logically sequenced and connected?

Logically sequenced and connected writing makes sense to the reader. There are no gaps or abrupt changes in time, place, or events, and the reader understands easily what is happening.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote about a field trip to the Orpheum theatre.

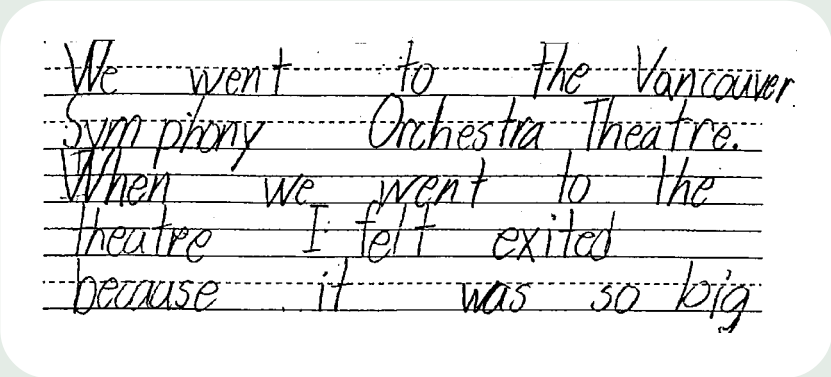
Teacher’s Observations

The student simply but clearly offers observations and opinions about a field trip.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 3 by March-April of the school year.

**Makes connections** – The student talks about personal feelings (e.g., “I felt very excited,” “I felt a bit scared”).



**Logically connected** – The student uses personal feelings to describe each event and connect the ideas.

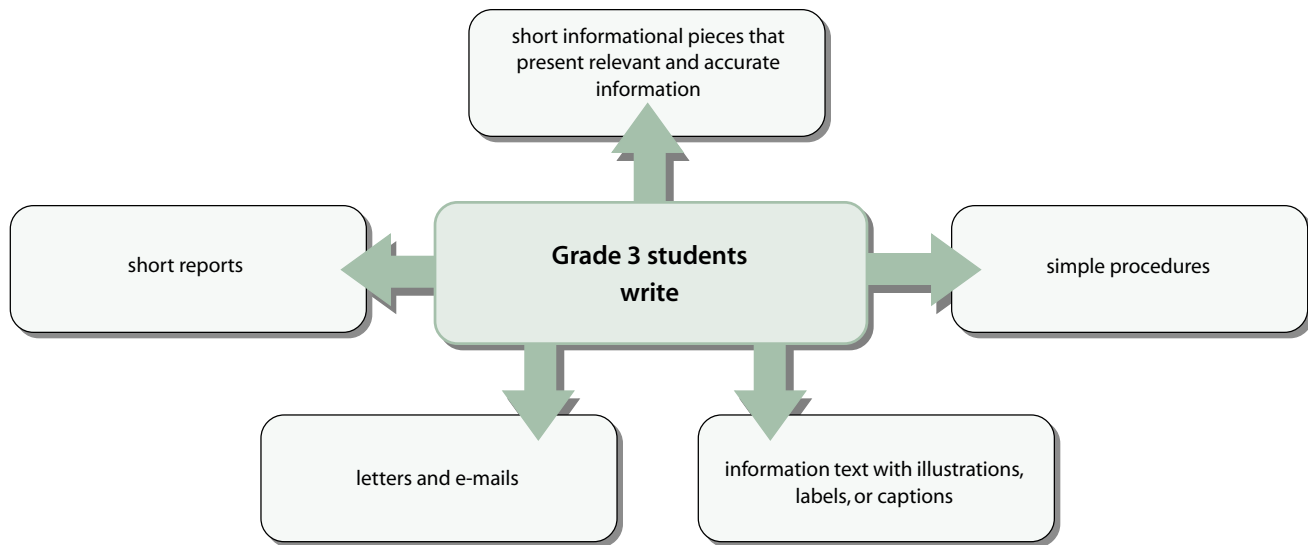
**Variety in language** – The writing includes details to help the reader picture what happened on the field trip (e.g., “sat down two by two,” “right in front of me,” “huge chandelier”).

**TRANSCRIPT**  
We went to the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Theatre. When we went to the theatre I felt excited because it was so big and there was so many people. My favorite song was the simpsons because I thought that they didn’t now the Simpsons. When I go back home I will still remember how big it was and how many people where there. I was surprised how many chairs there was. The people there did a good job. The Orpheum theatre was fun.

**Details and explanations** – The student tells why they were excited.

# Grade 3: Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

In Grade 3, students collect and organize information to create short reports and articles.



The child's classmates and teachers are the main audience (readers) for this type of writing. Sometimes, the audience is imagined (e.g., writing a letter to a story character). Writing for a wide range of readers (including teachers, classmates, family and community members, pen pals, and e-pals) helps children build their writing skills. Students can also share their writing in class newsletters, web sites, and community displays.

## Some Definitions:

**Revise:** rework to improve the organization and logic of ideas.

**Edit:** rework to improve grammar and ways ideas are expressed.

**Proofread:** check for errors of spelling, punctuation, or grammar.

Because this type of writing is intended for an audience, students revise, edit, and proofread their work before making final copies.



## Quick Scale: Grade 3 Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year.

Writing to communicate ideas and information is usually expected to be carefully revised, edited, and proofread.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing offers few ideas and little information. It is often disjointed, illogical, and hard to understand. The student needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing presents loosely connected ideas or information. It may be vague, hard to follow, or copied in places. May also be flawed by frequent basic errors.</i>	<i>The writing is clear and easy to follow, with relevant ideas and information on simple topics and procedures presented in the student's own words.</i>	<i>The writing flows smoothly, presenting clear, logical, and detailed information and ideas in the student's own words.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>use of <b>detail</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purpose may be unclear</li> <li>information may be invented or copied</li> <li>few relevant or accurate <b>details</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purpose often <b>vague</b></li> <li>some information may be copied or misinterpreted</li> <li>some relevant information; little <b>detail</b> or explanation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear purpose that is accomplished to some degree</li> <li><b>accurate</b></li> <li>some explanation, <b>details</b>, or <b>examples</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accomplishes the purpose</li> <li><b>accurate</b>; may use several sources</li> <li>explanations, <b>details</b>, or <b>examples</b> make ideas clear</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>basic, simple</b></li> <li>sentences often long and rambling or short and stilted; little variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple, familiar; not <b>specific</b> or exact</li> <li>repeats simple and compound sentences (may run on or be incomplete)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is clear; some attempts to be <b>specific</b> or exact</li> <li>some variety in sentences where appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is clear, direct, and <b>specific</b></li> <li>flows smoothly, with a variety of sentences where appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>key features</b></li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li>opening, conclusion</li> <li><b>visual features</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>intended form</b> is hard to determine</li> <li>may be disjointed</li> <li>may be very brief</li> <li><b>visual features</b> (e.g., diagrams) omitted or confusing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tries to follow <b>form</b>; may omit key features</li> <li>some sequence; may omit ordering or connecting words</li> <li>writing has a topic sentence but may lose focus</li> <li><b>visual features</b> (e.g., diagrams) may be hard to interpret</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses some <b>key features of the form</b></li> <li>logical sequence; uses ordering or connecting words</li> <li>writing has a topic sentence with some development</li> <li><b>visual features</b> (e.g., diagrams) are clear and relevant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>follows <b>key features of the form</b></li> <li>carefully sequenced; uses ordering or connecting words effectively</li> <li>writing develops from topic sentence to logical ending</li> <li><b>visual features</b> (e.g., diagrams) clear and helpful</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li><b>spelling</b></li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>correct pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors in grammar, <b>spelling</b>, punctuation, and sentence structure often make the writing hard to understand</li> <li>capitals often omitted or misused</li> <li>may be hard to read</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic <b>spelling</b> and punctuation is correct; errors do not interfere with meaning, although some parts may be hard to read</li> <li>may include run-on or incomplete sentences; may overuse pronouns</li> <li>legible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic grammar, <b>spelling</b>, punctuation, and sentence structure are correct; minor errors do not interfere with meaning</li> <li>may include errors with commas, quotation marks, agreement</li> <li>legible; clearly presented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks with newly acquired or complex language</li> <li>may overuse some punctuation marks or make occasional errors in agreement</li> <li>legible; presentation shows care</li> </ul>

# Grade 3 Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

## (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in writing to communicate ideas and information by March-April of Grade 3 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing offers few ideas, little information. It is often disjointed, illogical, and hard to understand. The student needs ongoing support.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><b>use of detail</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purpose may be unclear</li> <li>a large portion of the information may be "made up," misinterpreted, or copied</li> <li><b>few details</b>; these may be irrelevant, <b>vague</b>, or inaccurate</li> <li>seems unaware of audience</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>basic, simple language</b></li> <li>sentences are often long and rambling or short and stilted; little variety or sense of control</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>key features</li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li>paragraphs</li> <li>opening, conclusion</li> <li><b>visual features</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the <b>intended form</b> may be hard to determine (e.g., a recipe may be written in a paragraph)</li> <li>may seem disjointed and lack a sense of sequence</li> <li>may be very brief</li> <li>overuses a few connecting words (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>)</li> <li><b>visual features</b> (e.g., illustrations, diagrams) may be omitted or seem unconnected to written information</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li><b>spelling</b></li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>correct pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors make the writing hard to understand</li> <li>many incomplete or run-on sentences</li> <li><b>may misspell</b> simple, familiar words</li> <li>capitals and periods often omitted or misused</li> <li>pronouns are often confusing</li> <li>generally legible, although parts may be difficult to read</li> </ul>

### What is **vague**?

Writing that is **vague** is not clear. Usually, you can fix vague writing by adding details and specific examples. For example, "He crossed the street" versus "He looked both ways and carefully walked across the busiest street in town." In the second example, the information is more specific and gives the reader a more detailed picture of the action.

### What is **basic, simple language** for my child's grade level?

**Basic, simple language** is the use of simple, familiar words for the grade level. For this grade, these would be mainly one- and two-syllable words commonly used in writing (e.g., *happy, pretty, went, saw, mad, sad, little*).

### What are **visual features**?

**Visual features** include illustrations, photographs and diagrams frequently found in subject area reading materials.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students made a travel brochure to encourage people to visit a province or territory in Canada.

Teacher’s Observations

The brochure does not provide the required information. Much of the content is copied from another source.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 3 by March-April of the school year. Please note: there may be spelling errors in the transcript.

**Details** – The work did not include any examples. Drawings do not relate to the information. Information is copied.

**Intended form** – The form is hard to determine; the child’s work does not look like a brochure.

**Visual features** – The features are hard to interpret. One would have to ask the child to find out what they are.

May **misspell words**.



**Use of conventions** – Simple, familiar words are spelled correctly.

TRANSCRIPT

*This student included some drawings, but they are not clearly connected to the writing.*

Major Cities

Yellowknife, the capital of the Northwest Territtories, began as a fur trading centre. It was named for a Native people of the area. Gold rushes brought people in the 1930s and 1940s

What is the weather like

Half of the territories’ land lies north of the Arctic Circle. The winters are very long, very cold, and generally dry. However the climate does vary.

About size and location

The Northwest Territories, or N.W.T., include the northernmost areas of Canada. Land that was once part of N.W.T. now makes up Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and the Yukon, plus parts of Ontario and Quebec.

Sighns and sybols

The flag shows three panels—two narrow blue panels on either side of a white panel with the territorial shield on it.



# Grade 3 Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

## (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in writing to communicate ideas and information by March-April of Grade 3 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is clear and easy to follow, with relevant ideas and information on simple topics and procedures presented in the student's own words.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>focused around a clear purpose that is accomplished to some degree (e.g., instructions can be followed)</li> <li>information is usually <u>accurate</u> and complete; often drawn from a single source</li> <li>written in the <u>student's own words</u></li> <li>includes some explanations, <u>examples</u>, or <u>details</u></li> <li>shows some sense of audience or consideration for the reader</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is clear and shows some attempts to be exact or <u>specific</u></li> <li>some variety in sentence length and pattern where appropriate (e.g., instructions often repeat the same sentence pattern)</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>key features</u></li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li>paragraphs</li> <li>opening, conclusion</li> <li><u>visual features</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows awareness of some <u>key features of the specific form</u> (e.g., instructions are numbered)</li> <li>ideas are logically sequenced, although there may be occasional lapses</li> <li>reports, articles, and letters generally have a beginning, middle, and end; the end may seem abrupt</li> <li>uses a variety of simple ordering or connecting words</li> <li><u>visual information</u> (e.g., illustrations, diagrams) are clear and relevant to the written text</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li><u>spelling</u></li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>correct pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete</li> <li>most familiar words are <u>spelled</u> correctly, including capitals and apostrophes</li> <li>basic sentence punctuation is correct; the student may make errors when using commas or quotation marks</li> <li>most pronouns are clear and correct; may be some errors in agreement</li> <li>legible; clearly presented</li> </ul>

What does it mean to write in the student's own words?

At this level of writing development, one challenge is learning how to use your own words rather than copy right out of an informational text. Students need to learn how to take notes and then make original sentences and paragraphs with their own notes, thereby writing in "their own words".

What is specific language?

Specific language gives the reader a detailed picture of the topic or action. Writing that is vague does not paint a clear or interesting picture in the mind of a reader. For example, "He crossed the street" versus "He looked both ways and carefully walked across the busiest street in town". In the second example, the information is more specific and presents a more detailed picture of the action.

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students made a travel brochure to encourage people to visit a province or territory in Canada.

Teacher’s Observations

The brochure provides all the required information and is clear and easy to follow; most of it is written in the student’s own words.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 3 by March-April of the school year. Please note: there may be spelling errors in the transcript.

**Accurate** – The details in the brochure are full and accurately fit under the headings.

**Details** – The student gives accurate details (e.g., climate data), identifies many features – lakes, movie theatres, beaches, hiking trails.

May **misspell words**.

**TRANSCRIPT**  
*This student included detailed drawings to illustrate each section of the brochure.*

**New Brunswick**  
**Basic Information**  
Come to NEW BRUNSWICK Home of the mighty seaguls and many other animals. Where the water sparkels through the rivers. Then go play golf in the nice green fields.

**Travel Destination**  
Come to Fredricton and visit the many Beachs. Then go to New Brunswicks High lands and visit the peace of the Appalachian regions. The last destination is Canadas oldest city in St. John

**Recreational activities**  
You can go Swimming at the beach. You can go Hike in the forests and mabey go Fishing in the nice cold streams

**Location**  
It is between Nova Scotia and Quebec. It is located near the Atlantic Ocean. Fredricton is in the middle


**Climate**

	Low	High
May	4	17
June	10	23
July	13	26
Aug.	12	25
Sept.	2	13

**Geography**  
It is underlain by sedimentary rocks and has soils bulit on reletively stone-free glacial deposits. There are flat lands in some places and rocky in others

**Major cities**  
The longest covered bridg around the world crosses the St. John river at the hart land. New brunswick. or watch fredrictons soccer team

**Unique places or featchers of the area**  
Lots of movie theaters nice lakes. and many other places



**Examples** – The student includes climate data and illustrates the changing weather.

**Visual features (information)** – The student includes detailed drawings to illustrate each section of the brochure.

**Key features of specific form** – The student includes the information required by the form of the task (climate, geographic features, major cities).



# Grade 3: Writing Stories and Poems

In Grade 3, students most often write stories and poems about their everyday lives – their families, friends, and pets.

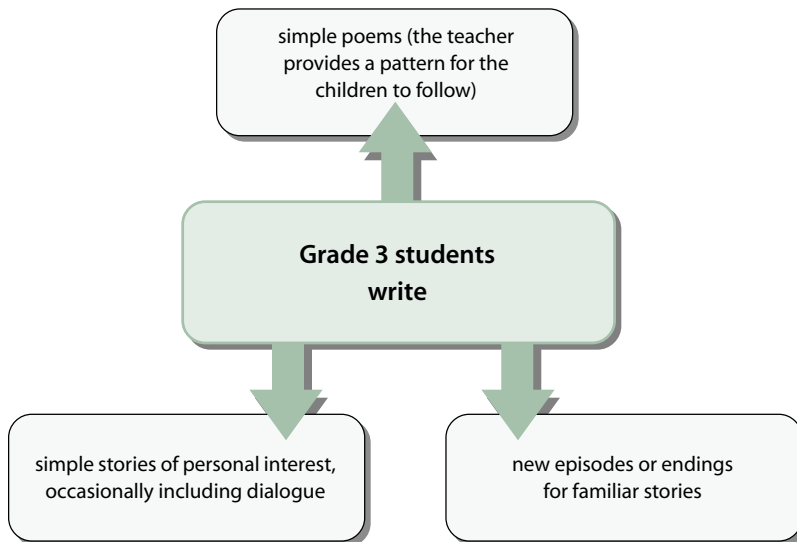
Because stories and poems are intended for an audience, students revise, edit, and proofread their work before creating final copies.

## Some Definitions:

**Revise:** rework to improve the organization and logic of ideas.

**Edit:** rework to improve grammar and ways ideas are expressed.

**Proofread:** check for errors of spelling, punctuation, or grammar.



## Quick Scale: Grade 3 Writing Stories and Poems

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Stories and poems are usually expected to be carefully revised, edited, and proofread.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing presents loosely connected events or ideas, with some detail; parts may be hard to follow or flawed by frequent errors.</i>	<i>The writing is a complete, easy-to-follow story or poem with some interesting detail.</i>	<i>The writing is an engaging story or poem with some originality.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may not have a <u>story problem or purpose</u></li> <li>few details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>often based on another selection</li> <li>some <u>details</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some <u>individuality</u>; considers reader's reaction</li> <li>some <u>supporting details</u> add "colour"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some originality and creative development; tries to make an impact</li> <li><u>supporting details</u> add "colour"</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic, <u>simple language</u></li> <li>sentences often long and rambling or short and stilted; little variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generally <u>simple language</u>; some description</li> <li>repeats simple and compound sentences (some may run on)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear; some story language and description</li> <li>some variety in sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear, varied, and often expressive; may experiment with new language</li> <li>flows smoothly; varied sentences</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> STORIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning, middle, end</li> <li>sequence</li> <li>characters</li> <li>dialogue</li> <li>connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may be very brief; loosely related events without an introduction</li> <li>characters are not described; no clear dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes beginning, middle, and end; often loses focus and ends abruptly</li> <li>characters are identified; may include dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develops logically sequenced events from a "story problem" to a reasonable solution</li> <li>characters have some individuality; often includes dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develops smoothly from an engaging opening; tries to create suspense or interest; reaches a satisfying conclusion</li> <li>characters have personality; dialogue often sounds natural</li> </ul>
POEMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poetic form</li> <li>descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>needs a frame or template</li> <li>may be one-word responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts a poetic form, but often writes in sentences</li> <li>attempts some descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts to use a poetic form; may lapse in places</li> <li>some descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a poetic form</li> <li>includes some descriptive and figurative language</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>complete sentences</u></li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>correct pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent basic errors affect meaning</li> <li>may be hard to read</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include several errors, but these do not interfere with basic meaning</li> <li>legible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning</li> <li>legible; clearly presented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks with newly acquired or complex language</li> <li>legible; care in presentation</li> </ul>

# Grade 3 Rating Scale for Writing Stories and Poems

## (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in writing stories and poems by March–April of Grade 3 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li>use of detail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purpose or <b>story problem</b> may be unclear</li> <li>few details; these may be irrelevant</li> <li>appears unaware of audience</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic, <b>simple language</b></li> <li>sentences are often long and rambling or short and stilted; little variety or control (the entire selection may be one long sentence)</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <b>STORIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning, middle, end</li> <li>sequence</li> <li>characters</li> <li>dialogue</li> <li>connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may be very brief; often a string of loosely related events—mostly “middle” with no problem or solution</li> <li>may “wander” into a new problem</li> <li>few characters; they are often not clearly identified or described</li> <li>if dialogue is included, it is confusing (in some cases, the entire story is dialogue, but the reader cannot tell who is speaking)</li> <li>overuses a few connecting words (e.g., <i>and, then</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>POEMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poetic form</li> <li>descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>needs a frame or template</li> <li>may feature one-word responses</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>complete sentences</b></li> <li><b>spelling</b></li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>correct pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors make the writing hard to understand</li> <li>many <b>incomplete</b> or run-on sentences</li> <li>may <b>misspell</b> simple, familiar words</li> <li>capitals and periods often omitted or misused</li> <li>pronouns are often confusing</li> <li>generally legible, although parts may be difficult to read</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Many of the conventions do not apply to poetry.</p>

### What is meant by **story problem or purpose**?

Most stories are organized around a **story problem**. The main character(s) are faced with some dilemma or situation that needs to be resolved. Solving the problem often carries the story forward. For example, many books children read at this level use a mystery format where something or someone is missing, a crime is committed, or some mysterious behaviour needs to be explained. Solving the mystery is like solving the **story problem**.

### What is **simple language**?

Simple language generally includes words that are frequently used in basic communication. For example, *ran, going, saw, play, boy, dog, fun, friend*. To add variety and interest, students should try to find other ways to say/write simple words (e.g., saw-spied; dog-furry friend; ran-dashed).

### What is a **complete sentence**?

**Complete sentences** have both subject and verb and therefore make sense. For example, “The cat and the mom and the dad went for a walk.”



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

## NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote a story about real or imaginary animals.

### Teacher's Observations

The story consists of a series of loosely connected pieces of advice about looking after a dragon.

The student needed continuing support to think of ideas and to complete the task.

### Student Sample

The example shows part of the student's original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 3 by March-April of the school year.

#### **Story problem or purpose**

The story has a beginning, middle, and end, but the ideas are loosely connected. There is no story problem.

#### **Complete Sentences**

Some of the ideas are unclear, and some sentences are incomplete. Sentences have little variety or control (e.g., there is a series of short, simple sentences, with no punctuation separating them).

How to care for a Dragon.  
I Have a pet Dragon I got it on  
my Badbay it is Hrd to tack care  
of fest all tell you How to Bath

#### **Use of**

#### **conventions**

Frequent basic errors make the writing hard to understand; some simple, familiar words are **misspelled** (e.g., *birthday*, *take*); capitals and periods are often omitted or misused.

#### **TRANSCRIPT**

#### **How to care for a Dragon**

I Have a pet Dragon I got it on my Badbay it is Hrd to tack care of frst all  
tell you How to Bath Him you Hato yos Dragon thapw he ywll Breus fir  
But I Hav a firicstlathr tat gos off evetim He Birsfire whut to feed Him  
cats or mis and nvr put your Had in His moth Wen a Dragon wets food  
Hre up ales He well get mad wow to keep a dragon dis playe wit Him  
He plas wie a Boll How to pot a Dragon to BeD snugl Him up and Not  
wac Him up

# Grade 3 Rating Scale for Writing Stories and Poems

## (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in writing stories and poems by March–April of Grade 3 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

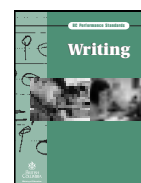
Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is a complete, easy-to-follow story or poem with some interesting detail.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas and information</li> <li><b>use of detail</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some <b>sense of individuality</b>, although the work may be modelled on another selection</li> <li>includes some <b>supporting details</b> that add “colour”</li> <li>appears to consider the audience or reader’s reaction</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is clear and often includes some story language or description</li> <li>some variety in sentence length and pattern</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <b>STORIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning, middle, end</li> <li>sequence</li> <li>characters</li> <li>dialogue</li> <li>connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>story develops from a logical problem to a reasonable solution</li> <li>most events are logically connected and sequenced</li> <li>some characters are described; it is easy to tell them apart</li> <li>often includes dialogue; the dialogue is easy to follow but may be somewhat stilted</li> <li>uses a variety of simple ordering or connecting words (e.g., <i>next, then, so, because, after, when, but</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>POEMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poetic form</li> <li>descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear attempts to write in poetic form; can usually replicate a poetic form that has been modelled</li> <li>uses descriptive language for effect</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>correct pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete</li> <li>most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes</li> <li>basic sentence punctuation is correct; may be errors in use of commas or quotation marks</li> <li>most pronouns are clear and correct; may be some errors in agreement</li> <li>legible; clearly presented</li> </ul>

What is a **sense of individuality**?

Writing that contains ideas and details that are imaginative and original shows a **sense of individuality**. Student writing that demonstrates this feature often has emotional impact and sometimes uses words that are more descriptive.

What are **supporting details** that add “colour”?

**Supporting details** give more information about characters, setting, or objects in their story. Ask your child what they can hear, feel, touch, taste, smell, or see at points in their story, and use these to add more detail. For objects, consider questions about colour, size, age, texture, weight, and whether the object reminds them of something else.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote a story about real or imaginary animals.

Teacher’s Observations

The student presents a complete, easy-to-read story in which a simple “story problem” is resolved.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 3 by March-April of the school year.

Individuality –

The writing shows originality in its solution to the problem (the monkeys lighting a fire to scare the lions away).

monckEys and the lions  
The monckEys lived in a  
tree. The grumpy lions lived  
in a cave. The problem

Supporting

details – The writing includes some supporting details that add colour to the story (used grass and sticks to make the fire).

TRANSCRIPT

monckEys and the lions

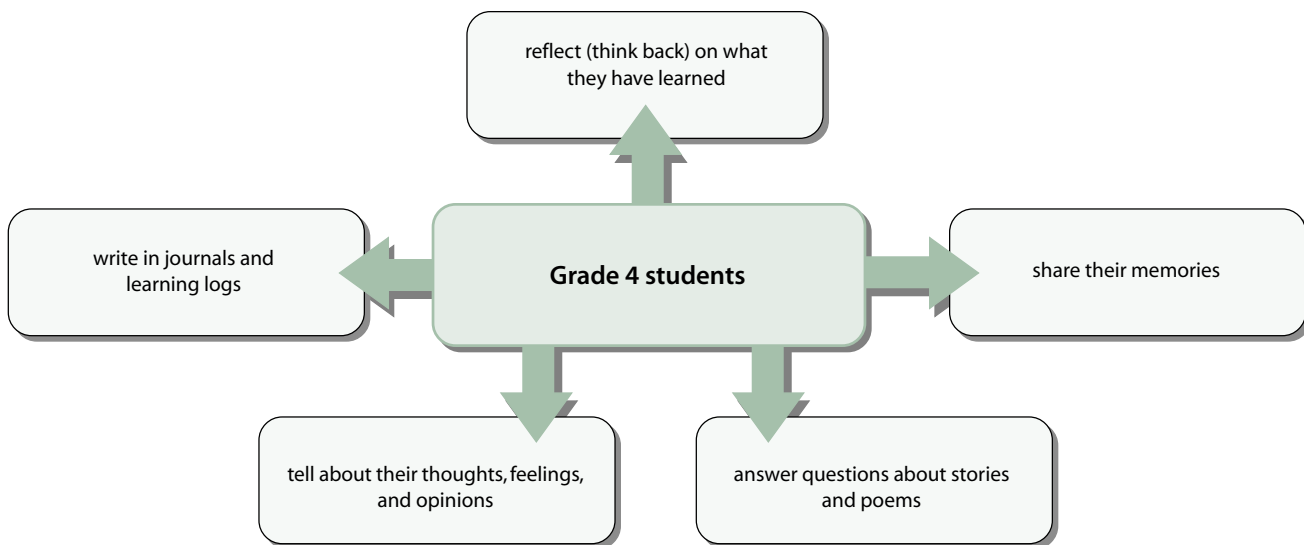
The monkeys lived in a tree. The grumpy lions lived in a cave. The problem was the lions tried to eat the monkeys. The monkeys tried to moof to a different tree to get away from the lions. It did not work because the lions ran faster than the monkeys. The monkeys had an idea they would make a fire around the tree to scare the lions. They lit a fire around there tree. They used grass and sticks to maKe the fire. It workEd the lions never came back. The monkeys had a big party because the lions we’re gone. The monkeys never got bothered by the lions again. They lived happily ever after.

Use of conventions –

The writing includes some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning.

# Grade 4: Personal, Impromptu Writing

Students are often asked to write about their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about their own experiences, current events, books, or movies.



In grade 4, students do not usually make corrections. Still, they are expected to follow the grammar, punctuation, and spelling rules they have learned.



## Quick Scale: Grade 4 Personal, Impromptu Writing

This Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Personal, impromptu writing is usually expected to be checked for errors but not revised or edited.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing presents loosely connected ideas with little development; parts may be confusing or flawed by frequent errors.</i>	<i>The writing presents relevant, easy-to-follow ideas with some detail and explanation. Growing control of written language; few errors.</i>	<i>The writing is clear, focused, and developed with some elaboration and individuality.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purpose or topic may be unclear</li> <li><u>few details</u>; may be copied or unrelated to the topic; often very short</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>retells; may give some opinions</li> <li>few relevant <u>details</u>, reasons, and explanations; often relies on ideas from class discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some analysis and reaction, often connected to retelling</li> <li>some supporting <u>details</u>, reasons, and explanations (e.g., how student felt)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develops a point of view or opinion with a sense of individuality</li> <li><u>develops ideas</u> with some engaging <u>details</u>, reasons, and examples</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>basic language</u>; often errors in word choice</li> <li>poorly constructed sentences; little variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generally simple language; little variety</li> <li>simple and compound sentences; little variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>clear, direct language</u>; some variety</li> <li>some variety in sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is varied; often tries new words</li> <li>flows smoothly; has sentence variety</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning</li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li><u>connecting words</u></li> <li>ending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning may be confusing</li> <li>unfocused; ideas seem unrelated to topic; may be very short</li> <li>disjointed; overuses a few <u>connecting words</u> (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>) or omits them altogether</li> <li>ending may be missing or illogical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>usually identifies the topic</li> <li>middle is often simply a list of loosely related events</li> <li>repeats a few simple <u>connecting words</u> (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>, <i>so</i>); may omit them in places</li> <li>often omits endings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>introduces the topic</li> <li>middle is often a list of related but undeveloped reasons, examples, and <u>details</u></li> <li>uses a variety of <u>connecting words</u></li> <li>ending may be abrupt (i.e., ends, but does not conclude)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>introduces the topic, often in an engaging way</li> <li>develops topic through relevant, appropriate ideas, logically organized</li> <li>smooth transitions; range of effective <u>connecting words</u></li> <li>has a conclusion</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, <u>repeated errors</u> make the writing difficult to understand</li> <li>many incomplete or <u>run-on sentences</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>several errors; these may make parts hard to follow</li> <li>most simple sentences are correct; some incomplete or <u>run-on sentences</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some errors, but these do not affect meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete; few <u>run-on sentences</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks</li> <li>complete sentences; may include some errors in long or complex sentences</li> </ul>



# Grade 4 Rating Scale for Personal, Impromptu Writing

## (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in personal, impromptu writing tasks by March–April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas</li> <li><b>use of detail</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purpose or topic may be unclear</li> <li><b>few details</b>; these are often copied or unrelated to the topic; often very short</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>basic language</b>; often includes errors in word choice</li> <li>sentences are poorly constructed, with little variety or control (may be written as one sentence)</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning</li> <li>focus</li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li>connecting words</li> <li>ending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning may be confusing, with no clear topic or purpose</li> <li>unfocused; ideas often seem unrelated to topic or to each other</li> <li>little development; often very short</li> <li>disjointed; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., <i>and, then</i>) or omits them altogether</li> <li>ending may be missing or illogical</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent <b>repeated errors</b> make the writing difficult to understand</li> <li>many incomplete or <b>run-on sentences</b></li> <li>may misspell simple words; word endings may be omitted or formed incorrectly</li> <li>capitals and periods often omitted or misused</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns (overuse; noun-pronoun agreement) and verbs (tense; subject-verb agreement)</li> </ul>

What does it mean to have **few related details**?

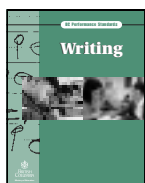
**Related details** are those that are about the paragraph topic. For example, if a child is writing about a trip to Disneyland and only tells about one ride, they have written **few related details** about the topic.

What is **basic language**?

**Basic language** generally has short sentences that contain only one idea. For example, "The girl ran home. The girl told her dad. The girl was sad." As writing skills improve, students are able to connect their ideas in longer sentences and use more descriptive language. For example, "Marcie ran home and told her father about the tragedy."

What is a **run-on sentence**?

A **run-on sentence** is two or more complete sentences that are incorrectly joined together as one. For example, "Families living on homesteads had many chores to do young children had to help." The sentence could be written correctly as "Families living on homesteads had many chores to do, so young children had to help." Or, it could be written as two sentences: "Families living on homesteads had many chores to do. Even young children had to help."



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote about their plans before spring break or their experiences during spring break.

Teacher’s Observations

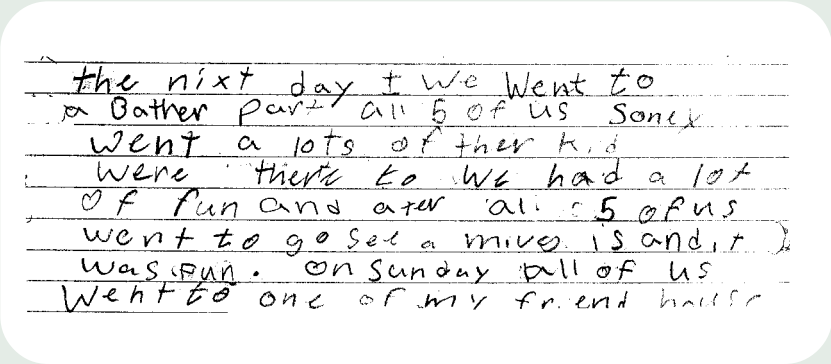
The student’s writing is brief, disjointed, and flawed by repeated basic errors.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 4 by March-April of the school year.

**Few related details** – Most ideas are loosely related to the topic.

**Basic language** – The student made errors in word choice (e.g., *went* for *with*).



**Repeated errors** – The repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand.

**Run-on sentences** – Sentences are not put together well and are incomplete. Many run-on sentences make the writing hard to understand.

TRANSCRIPT

On Friday I went With my Dad to his friend house my little siste came to We sou a meive at my dad friend house and the me and my little SiSter went to go and eat something We had Some Cowen. I had Three and my had two. the nixt day I we went to a Bather part all 5 of us Soney went a lots of ther kid were there to We had a lot Of Fun and ater all 5 of us went to go see a mive is and it was Fun. On Sunday all of us Went to one of my friend house he had three boy we had fun went them.  
The end

# Grade 4 Rating Scale for Personal, Impromptu Writing

## (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in personal, impromptu writing tasks by March–April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing presents relevant, easy-to-follow ideas with some detail and explanation. Shows growing control of written language; few errors.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas</li> <li>use of detail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>offers some analysis and reaction, often connected to retelling an experience; there is an emerging sense of individuality</li> <li><b>elaborates main idea(s)</b> with some supporting details, reasons, and explanations (e.g., how student felt)</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generally relies on <b>clear and direct language</b>, with some variety (e.g., adjectives, interesting verbs)</li> <li>some variety in sentence length and pattern</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning</li> <li>focus</li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li><b>connecting words</b></li> <li>ending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>introduces the topic or issue</li> <li><b>sticks to the topic</b>; ideas are relevant (but may not be developed)</li> <li>middle often consists of a list of related reasons, examples, and details; organization is easy to follow</li> <li>uses a variety of ordering or <b>connecting words</b> (e.g., next, then, so, because, after, when, but) to make connections among ideas; may omit these in places</li> <li>ending may be abrupt (i.e., ends, but does not conclude)</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some errors, but these do not affect meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete; few run-ons</li> <li>most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes</li> <li>basic sentence punctuation is correct; may be errors in use of commas as they try to write longer, more complex sentences</li> <li>most pronouns and verbs are correct; may be some errors in subject-verb agreement, especially where there are compound subjects, and in pronoun form</li> </ul>

What is **clear and direct language**?

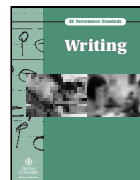
At this level, children often use more general words in their writing. This is **clear and direct language**.

What does the phrase **sticks to the topic** mean?

When students **stick to the topic**, they include only details that are important to make clear the main topic of the writing.

What are **connecting words** and phrases?

**Connecting words** and phrases signal changes between ideas and details. Examples of connecting words and phrases include *first, next, the next day, because, soon, then, so, but, after*. These words help the reader understand when the action moves from one time period to another or from one place to another.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote about their plans before spring break or their experiences during spring break.

Teacher’s Observations

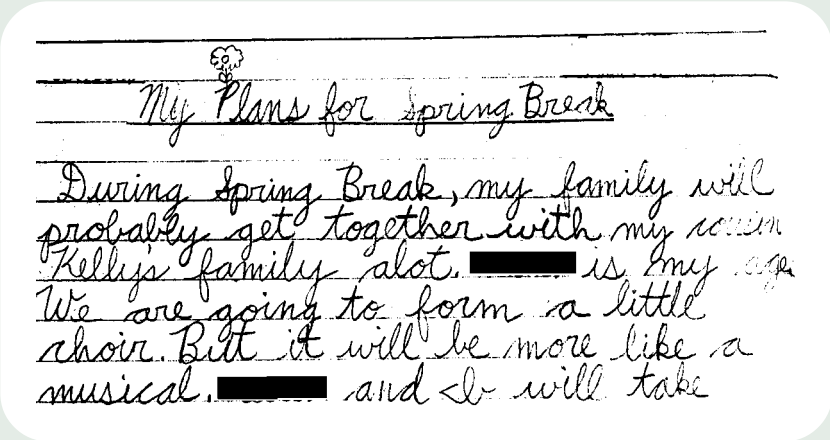
The writing is relevant and easy to follow. It shows growing control of written language, with few errors.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 4 by March-April of the school year.

**Elaborates main ideas** – The student uses supporting details to explain what the family will do during the spring break.

**Uses clear and direct language** – The language in the writing consists of simple, easily understood words.



**Sticks to the topic** – The writing stays on topic and avoids the use of unrelated ideas.

**Connecting words and phrases** – The student uses a variety of connecting words (e.g., then, but).

**TRANSCRIPT**

**My Plans for Spring Break**

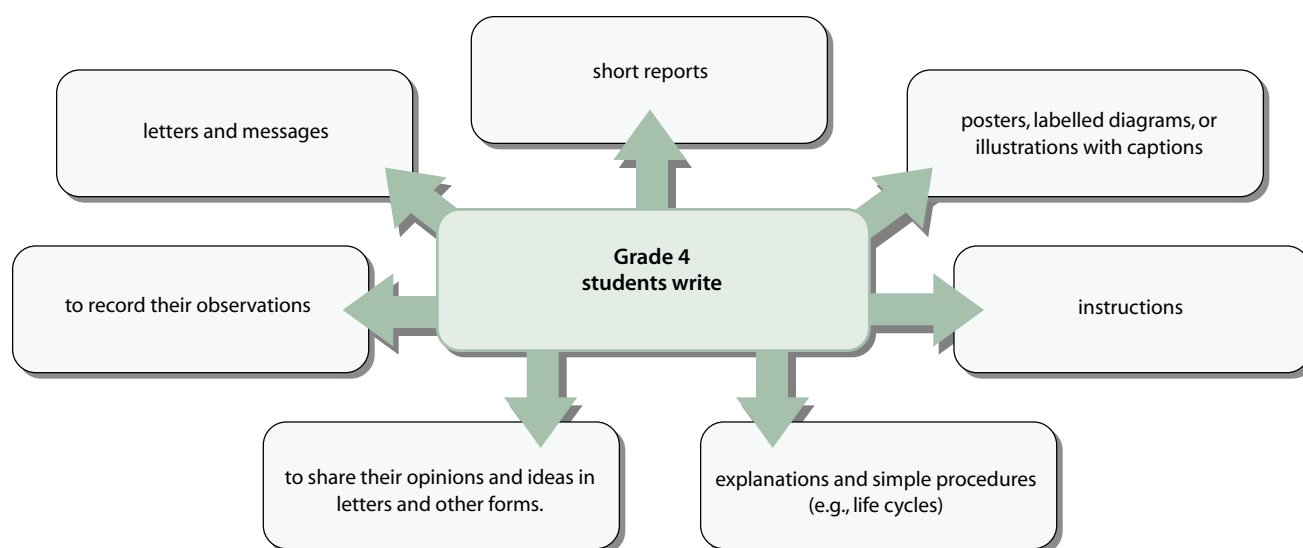
During Spring Break, my family will probably get together with my cousin — family alot. — is my age We are going to form a little choir. But it will be more like a musical. — and I will take turns playing the piano. Then, my brother and her sister aged four and one of us will chose a topic and make up a song. I might have a sleepover at her house. We won't go on vacation But after spring break, we will go on vacation.

"Good thoughts  
Good words  
Good deeds!"



# Grade 4: Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

In Grade 4, students collect and organize information to create short reports and articles.



The child's classmates and teachers are the main audience (readers) for this type of writing. Sometimes, the audience is imagined (e.g., writing a letter to a story character). Writing for a wide range of readers, including teachers, classmates, family and community members, pen pals, and e-pals, helps children build their writing skills. Students can also share their writing in class newsletters, web sites, and community displays.

## Some Definitions:

**Revise:** rework to improve the organization and logic of ideas.

**Edit:** rework to improve grammar and ways ideas are expressed.

**Proofread:** check for errors of spelling, punctuation, or grammar.

Because this type of writing is intended for an audience, students revise, edit, and proofread their work before making final copies.



## Quick Scale: Grade 4 Writing Reports, Articles, and Letters

This Quick Scale and the one that follows summarizes the Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information. All three describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Reports, articles, and letters are usually expected to be carefully revised, edited, and proofread.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing communicates little information; does not accomplish basic task. Often very brief, illogical, flawed by repeated errors. Needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing communicates loosely connected ideas and information; tries to deal with most requirements of the task. Includes some errors; minor amounts may be copied.</i>	<i>The writing communicates relevant, easy-to-follow information in the student's own words; competently fulfils most task requirements.</i>	<i>The writing communicates clear, detailed information that fully and effectively accomplishes the purpose or task.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>topic and purpose</b></li> <li>• ideas and information</li> <li>• <b>details</b></li> <li>• sense of audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• topic unclear</li> <li>• little accurate information</li> <li>• few <b>details</b>; often copied, irrelevant, or very short</li> <li>• no attempt to interest reader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>topic is clear</b></li> <li>• some accurate information; parts may be copied</li> <li>• main ideas with little support; often relies on ideas discussed in class</li> <li>• may try to engage interest in the opening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>topic and purpose are clear</b></li> <li>• generally accurate and written in the student's own words</li> <li>• elaborates main idea(s) with some <b>supporting details</b>, explanations</li> <li>• some attempts to engage the reader's interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focused around a <b>clear topic and purpose</b>; meets or exceeds requirements</li> <li>• information is concrete, accurate, complete; in own words</li> <li>• develops ideas through specific and engaging <b>details</b> and explanations</li> <li>• tries to make the material interesting and easy to follow</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarity, variety, and precision of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic language; often errors in word choice</li> <li>• sentences are poorly constructed, with little variety or control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generally <b>simple language</b>; little variety</li> <li>• relies on simple and compound sentences; little variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relies on clear, <b>simple, and direct language</b>; may try to be specific</li> <li>• some variety in sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language is varied; tries to be precise</li> <li>• flows smoothly, with a variety of sentence patterns and lengths</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opening</li> <li>• organization and sequence</li> <li>• paragraphs</li> <li>• <b>text features</b></li> <li>• ending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning may be confusing or omitted</li> <li>• sequence is disjointed and hard to follow</li> <li>• little or no paragraphing</li> <li>• weak or omitted <b>text features</b> (e.g., titles, headings, illustrations, diagrams)</li> <li>• ending omitted or illogical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• usually identifies the topic at beginning</li> <li>• often a list of events or information, repeating a few simple connecting words; some abrupt transitions</li> <li>• most paragraphs have a main idea; may include unsorted detail</li> <li>• <b>text features</b> (e.g., titles, headings, illustrations, diagrams) may be hard to interpret</li> <li>• often omits ending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduces the topic or purpose</li> <li>• ideas are easy to follow and connected by varied transitions (may be omitted in places)</li> <li>• most paragraphs have a main idea and support</li> <li>• clear, relevant <b>text features</b> (e.g., titles, headings, illustrations, diagrams); may have minor flaws</li> <li>• ending may be abrupt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clearly introduces the topic or purpose</li> <li>• sequence is logical, with smooth, varied transitions</li> <li>• paragraphs are focused on a main idea with effective support</li> <li>• effective <b>text features</b> (e.g., titles, headings, illustrations, diagrams) elaborate or clarify the text</li> <li>• provides a conclusion</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete sentences</li> <li>• spelling</li> <li>• capitals</li> <li>• punctuation</li> <li>• grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequent, repeated <b>errors</b> make the writing difficult to understand</li> <li>• many incomplete or run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• includes several <b>errors</b>; may make parts hard to follow</li> <li>• some incomplete or run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some <b>errors</b>, but these do not affect meaning</li> <li>• most sentences are complete; few run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>few errors</b>; these are usually caused by taking risks</li> <li>• complete sentences; may include some errors in long sentences</li> </ul>

## Quick Scale: Grade 4 Writing Instructions and Procedures

This Quick Scale and the preceding one summarizes the Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information. All three describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Reports, articles, and letters are usually expected to be carefully revised, edited, and proofread.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b>	<i>The writing does not communicate enough accurate information to complete the task. Flawed by repeated errors. Needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing is an attempt to deal with most requirements of the task. Communicates some accurate information. Includes several errors.</i>	<i>The writing competently deals with most requirements of the task. Communicates relevant, easy-to-follow information.</i>	<i>The writing communicates clear, detailed information that fully and effectively accomplishes the task.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> • <u>topic and purpose</u> • achieves purpose • ideas and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• topic may be unclear</li> <li>• does not accomplish the task (e.g., reader cannot make the product or complete the process by following the instructions)</li> <li>• little accurate information; few <u>details</u>; often very short</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>topic is clear</u></li> <li>• tries to deal with most task requirements (e.g., reader can partially complete the process or make the product)</li> <li>• some accurate information; may rely on class discussion; parts may be inaccurate or copied</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>topic and purpose are clear</u></li> <li>• accomplishes the task at a basic level (e.g., reader can complete the basic process or make the product by following the instructions)</li> <li>• generally accurate, with some <u>detail</u>; written in the student's own words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focused around a clear topic and purpose; meets or exceeds requirements</li> <li>• fully accomplishes the task (e.g., reader can easily complete the process or make the product by following the instructions)</li> <li>• information is concrete, accurate, specific, complete, and written in own words</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity, variety, and precision of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic language; often errors in word choice</li> <li>• sentences are poorly constructed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generally <u>simple language</u>; little variety</li> <li>• relies on simple and compound sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relies on clear, <u>simple, and direct language</u>; may try to be specific</li> <li>• some variety in sentences if appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language is varied; tries to be precise</li> <li>• flows smoothly, with varied sentences where appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> • titles and headings • key features • organization and sequence • voice • graphics, visual features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may omit titles and headings</li> <li>• little or no attention to form (e.g., does not number steps)</li> <li>• often unsorted list or one paragraph</li> <li>• often retells rather than instructs</li> <li>• may omit required diagrams or sketches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has a title or heading related to the purpose</li> <li>• uses some key features of the form (e.g., numbers steps)</li> <li>• organized into steps or sections sometimes connected by simple connecting words</li> <li>• mostly explains or instructs (rather than retells)</li> <li>• provides some required illustrations, diagrams; flawed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• title or heading identifies purpose</li> <li>• uses most key features of the form (e.g., numbers steps)</li> <li>• logically organized into steps or sections with some careful use of connecting words (e.g., <i>at the same time</i>)</li> <li>• explains or instructs (rather than retells); may slip</li> <li>• illustrations; diagrams are clear, relevant, and labelled; minor flaws</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective titles, headings, subheadings</li> <li>• uses key features of the specific form</li> <li>• logically organized into steps or sections, with careful use of connecting words (e.g., <i>before you start, while</i>); complete, easy-to-follow sequence</li> <li>• consistently explains or instructs; may use a formal tone</li> <li>• illustrations and diagrams are clear, complete, well labelled</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • punctuation • grammar/ usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequent, repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand</li> <li>• many incomplete or run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• includes several errors; may make parts hard to follow</li> <li>• some incomplete or run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some errors, but these do not affect meaning</li> <li>• most sentences are complete; few run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks</li> <li>• complete sentences; may include some errors in long sentences</li> </ul>



# Grade 4 Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

## (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in writing to communicate ideas and information by March–April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing communicates little information and does not accomplish the basic task or purpose. Often very brief, illogical, and flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purpose</li> <li>task</li> <li>accuracy</li> <li>use of detail</li> <li>sense of audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>topic may be unclear</li> <li>does not accomplish the task (e.g., reader cannot make the product or complete the process by following the instructions)</li> <li>little accurate information</li> <li>few details; these are often copied or unrelated to the topic; often very short</li> <li>shows no awareness that writing should be interesting for the reader</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and precision of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic, <b>simple language</b>; often includes errors in word choice</li> <li>sentences are poorly constructed, with little variety or control (may be written as one sentence)</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> REPORTS, ARTICLES, LETTERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opening</li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li>paragraphs</li> <li><b>text features</b></li> <li>conclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning may be confusing, with no clear topic or purpose</li> <li>sequence and organization appear random</li> <li>little or no paragraphing; ideas may seem unrelated to topic or to each other</li> <li>disjointed; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>) or omits them all together</li> <li><b>text features</b> (e.g., titles, headings, illustrations, diagrams) are often omitted, inaccurate, or difficult to interpret</li> <li>ending may be missing or illogical</li> </ul>
INSTRUCTIONS, PROCEDURES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>titles and headings</li> <li>key features</li> <li>voice</li> <li>organization</li> <li>connecting words</li> <li>graphics, visual features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>required titles or headings may be misleading or omitted</li> <li>little or no attention to form (e.g., instructions may not look like instructions)</li> <li>often retells own experience rather than instructs</li> <li>may be an unsorted list or one paragraph; steps or sections are often omitted or combined</li> <li>disjointed; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>) or omits them altogether</li> <li>may omit required diagrams or sketches</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand</li> <li>many incomplete or run-on sentences</li> <li>may misspell simple words; word endings may be omitted or formed incorrectly</li> <li>capitals and periods often omitted or misused</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns (overuse; noun-pronoun agreement) and verbs (tense; subject-verb agreement)</li> <li>parts may be difficult to read</li> </ul>

What is **simple language**?

**Simple language** generally includes words that are frequently used in basic communication. For example, *ran, going, saw, play, boy, dog, fun, friend*. To add variety and interest, students should try to find other words that mean the same thing but are more interesting (e.g., saw-spied; dog-furry friend; ran-dashed).

What are **text features**?

Text features include headings, definitions, text that has been highlighted, glossaries, tables of contents, indexes, figures, and diagrams that are found in many non-fiction (information) books. Text features can also include review questions, summaries, and extra information boxes.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students worked individually to select a topic of interest and write an informational page on how to do something. Their finished work was to include some features found in informational writing (e.g., glossary, bold headings, captions, maps, and diagrams).

Teacher’s Observations

The writing communicates little information and does not accomplish the basic purpose. The student needed one-to-one support.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 4 by March-April of the school year.

**Simple language** – The writer uses simple language.

**Conventions** – The writer misspells many familiar words, and word endings are omitted or formed incorrectly; capitals and periods are often used but often incorrectly.

TRANSCRIPT

How to build a theme park

My name is . Theme park’s (no sim coaster are hard to build (some time’s). Sim coaster. is a very involved game.

1. Build drink and Frie shops.
2. Build a roller caaster
3. Open the door’s. Build a science led.
4. Hire scientists. Research Operahon Flug Hole.
5. Train gardenera and other staff
6. Drain the lake and Train engineer.
7. Open ride (wheel one)

I tought you everything I know.

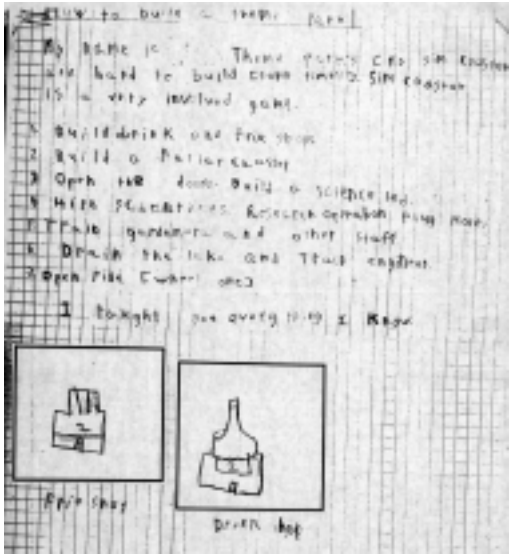
[illustration]

Frie Shop

[illustration]

Drenk shop

**Text features** – The writer does not include required text features (e.g., titles and headings).



# Grade 4 Rating Scale for Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

## (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in writing to communicate ideas and information by March–April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing communicates relevant, easy-to-follow ideas and information in the student's own words. Competently fulfils most requirements of the task.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purpose</li> <li>task</li> <li>accuracy</li> <li><b>use of detail</b></li> <li>sense of audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>topic and purpose are clear</b></li> <li>accomplishes the task at a basic level (e.g., for procedures, reader can complete the basic process or make the product by following the instructions)</li> <li>information is generally accurate and written in the student's own words</li> <li>elaborates main idea(s) with some <b>supporting details</b>, reasons, and explanations</li> <li>makes some attempt to engage the reader's interest</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and precision of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is clear, simple, and direct; some attempts to be specific or use <b>appropriate technical language</b></li> <li>some variety in sentence length and pattern (where appropriate; instructions may not have variety)</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> REPORTS, ARTICLES, LETTERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opening</li> <li>organization and sequence</li> <li>paragraphs</li> <li><b>text features</b></li> <li>conclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>introduces the topic or purpose</li> <li>ideas are connected and easy to follow</li> <li>most paragraphs have a main idea and related details (tends to rely on listing related information)</li> <li>uses a variety of ordering or connecting words to connect ideas; may omit these in places</li> <li>text features (e.g., titles, headings, illustrations, diagrams) are generally clear and relevant; may have minor flaws</li> <li>ending may be abrupt (i.e., ends, but does not conclude)</li> </ul>
INSTRUCTIONS, PROCEDURES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>titles and headings</li> <li>key features</li> <li>voice</li> <li>organization</li> <li>connecting words</li> <li>graphics, visual features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>title or heading clearly identifies purpose</li> <li>uses most key features of the specific form (e.g., instructions are numbered)</li> <li>explains or instructs (rather than retells); may slip</li> <li>logically organized into steps or sections</li> <li>some careful use of ordering or connecting words (e.g., <i>before you start</i>, <i>at the same time</i>)</li> <li>required illustrations and diagrams are generally clear, relevant, and labelled; may have minor flaws</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some errors, but these do not affect meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete; few run-on sentences</li> <li>most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes</li> <li>basic sentence punctuation is correct; may be errors in use of commas as the student tries to write longer, more complex sentences</li> <li>most pronouns and verbs are correct; may be some errors in <b>subject-verb agreement</b>, especially where there are compound subjects, and in pronoun form</li> <li>legible; clearly and neatly presented</li> </ul>

What does **topic and purpose are clear** mean?

A **topic is clear** when the main idea is evident and all details clearly relate to the main idea. The **purpose is clear** when the ideas and topic are written for a reason and the reader can tell the purpose (e.g., to give instructions, tell about a science experiment).

What does **appropriate technical language** mean?

**Technical language** is usually found in specific subject areas, such as science, mathematics, and computers. Appropriate use of technical language at this level means that the child is able to use sophisticated and often scientific vocabulary correctly in their writing. They understand the meanings of these kinds of words and are able to use them in ways that make sense.

What is meant by **subject-verb agreement**?

**Subject-verb agreement** occurs when the subject of a sentence (usually a noun) and the verb match. For example, "They rode their bikes home" contains subject-verb agreement, while "They rided their bikes home" does not, because *ridid* is not an appropriate verb. A further example of lack of subject-verb agreement is "We has never been here before."

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students worked individually to select a topic of interest and write an informational page on how to do something. Their finished work was to include some features found in informational writing (e.g., glossary, bold headings, captions, maps, and diagrams).

Teacher’s Observations

The ideas are expressed in the student’s own words.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 4 by March-April of the school year. Please note: there may be spelling errors in the transcript.

**Topic is clear** – The **topic** (castle life) is clearly evident; the writing is focused around a clear purpose (to tell about castles) that is largely accomplished.

**Few errors in conventions** – The writing contains a few errors, but none that affect meaning; the writing demonstrates an understanding of sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb agreement) and basic sentence punctuation.

TRANSCRIPT

**All About Castle Life**

My name is— and I am very interested in castles. I have learned about castles for two years. Now I want to show you what I have learned.

**How To Build a Castle**

- 1. Find an empty space
  - 2. Plan the castle
  - 3. Build a boroughs
  - 4. Upgrade to motte and bailey
  - 5. Include these rooms; inner and outer ward prison tower and ramparis
  - 6. Add these for defence; moat, arrow holes and the Walled court
- [illustrations]: turrets, draw bridge, hooh, leather tunic, helmet, armour
- [illustration]: a Dungeon is used for keeping prisoners.

**Weapons**

- 1. Mace club- with spiked ball on end
- 2. Sword- long sharp metal blade fixed to a handle
- 3. Axe- sharp axe head attached to short piece of wood
- 4. Bow and arrow curved piece of wood with a string attached used to launch arrows,

**Glossary**

- 1. Turrets, the turrets are for archers to hide behind
  - 2. Boroughs, small castle
  - 3. Ramparts, ledges that defenders stood on
- I hope you have enjoyed learning all about castlelife.



**Supporting details** – The writer tells more about the main idea with some supporting details, reasons, and explanations.

**Text features** – Follows most key features of the specific form of writing (e.g., glossary, boxes, captions, steps, diagrams, pictures).

**Appropriate technical language** – The student communicates information accurately using the correct terms for castle life (e.g., moat, turret).



# Grade 4: Writing Stories and Poems

In Grade 4, students most often write stories and poems about their everyday lives—their families, friends, and pets.

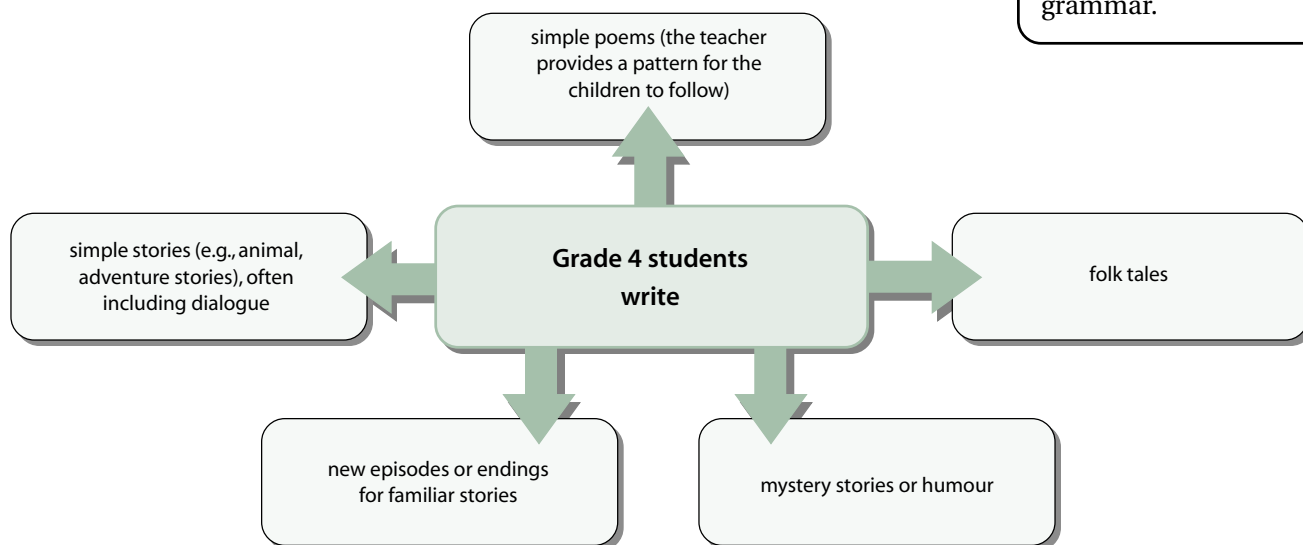
Because stories and poems are intended for an audience, students revise, edit, and proofread their work before creating final copies.

## Some Definitions:

**Revise:** rework to improve the organization and logic of ideas.

**Edit:** rework to improve grammar and ways ideas are expressed.

**Proofread:** check for errors of spelling, punctuation, or grammar.



## Quick Scale: Grade 4 Writing Stories

This Quick Scale and the one that follows summarizes the Rating Scale for Writing Stories and Poems. All three describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Stories are usually expected to be carefully revised, edited, and proofread.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The story is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The story offers loosely connected events with little development; parts may be confusing or flawed by frequent errors.</i>	<i>The story is complete and easy to follow, with some interesting detail. Shows growing control of written language; few errors.</i>	<i>The story is engaging, with some originality and development. Language is varied and effective.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas</li> <li><b>use of detail</b></li> <li><b>awareness of audience</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>point of story may be unclear</li> <li>reveals few details; <b>development may be illogical</b></li> <li>shows little <b>awareness of audience</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>relies on ideas discussed in class or from another story</li> <li>some detail; some may be irrelevant</li> <li>some <b>awareness of audience</b>; sometimes tries to create “shock value”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>concrete, direct story; draws on ideas from other sources, but has some individuality</li> <li>some relevant <b>supporting details</b></li> <li>appears to consider the reader’s reaction in choosing content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some sense of individuality or originality, although events and images may be predictable</li> <li>effective <b>supporting details</b> add colour</li> <li>tries to engage the reader, create reactions</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic language; often errors in word choice</li> <li><b>poorly constructed sentences</b>; little variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generally simple language; little variety</li> <li>simple and compound sentences; little variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear, direct language with some variety</li> <li>some <b>variety in sentences</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is varied; often experiments</li> <li>flows smoothly, varies sentences, sometimes to create a special effect</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning</li> <li>development</li> <li><b>characters</b></li> <li>dialogue (where appropriate)</li> <li>paragraphing, transitions</li> <li>ending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning may be confusing</li> <li>some action and events; often illogical, very brief</li> <li>names characters</li> <li>if dialogue is included, it is confusing</li> <li>disjointed; often one paragraph with few <b>connecting words</b></li> <li>ending omitted or illogical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>begins with a problem</li> <li>some development; <b>sequence</b> may be hard to follow in places</li> <li>names and identifies main characters</li> <li>often includes dialogue; may be ineffective</li> <li>some paragraphing; tends to repeat simple <b>connecting words</b>; may omit them in places</li> <li>ending may be abrupt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning introduces the situation</li> <li>develops a logically <b>sequenced</b> events</li> <li>describes appearance and feelings of some characters</li> <li>clear dialogue</li> <li>uses paragraphs and a variety of <b>connecting words</b></li> <li>conclusion may be abrupt or hard to believe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning engages interest in the problem</li> <li>story seems to develop naturally, with a logical <b>sequence</b></li> <li>characters often show personality and feelings in actions and words</li> <li>clear, natural dialogue</li> <li>logical paragraphing; smooth transitions</li> <li>ending resolves the problem</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand</li> <li>many incomplete or run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes several errors; may make parts hard to follow</li> <li>some incomplete or run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some errors, but these do not affect meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete; few run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks</li> <li>complete sentences; may include some errors in long sentences</li> </ul>



## Quick Scale: Grade 4 Writing Poems

This Quick Scale and the preceding one summarizes the Rating Scale for Writing Stories and Poems. All three describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Stories are usually expected to be carefully revised, edited, and proofread.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	Often very brief, disjointed, or illogical, and flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.	Loosely connected image or ideas with little development; parts may be confusing or flawed by frequent errors.	Complete, easy-to-follow poem with some interesting detail. Shows growing control of written language; few errors.	Engaging poem, with some originality and development. Language is varied and effective.
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> <li><u>awareness of audience</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purpose of poem may be unclear</li> <li>few <b>details</b>; may be illogical</li> <li>shows little <u>awareness of audience</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>relies on ideas discussed in class or from another poem</li> <li>some <b>details</b>; some may be irrelevant</li> <li>may show some <u>awareness of audience</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>concrete, direct poem; draws on ideas from other sources, but has some individuality</li> <li>some relevant supporting details</li> <li>appears to consider the reader's reaction in choosing language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some sense of individuality or originality, although images may be predictable</li> <li>effective supporting details add colour</li> <li>tries to engage the reader and create a reaction</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, <b>variety</b>, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic language; often errors in word choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generally simple language; little <u>variety</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>relies on concrete and direct descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is descriptive and varied; often experiments</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poetic form</li> <li>descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>needs the support of a frame or template</li> <li>uses little or no descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tries to write in poetic form (usually one that has been recently modelled), but the result may be in sentences</li> <li>attempts some descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>writes in poetic form (usually one that has been recently modelled); may have trouble with the "rules" in places</li> <li>uses descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>writes in poetic form; generally able to follow the "rules," but may be awkward in places</li> <li>experiments with descriptive and figurative language</li> </ul>
<u><b>CONVENTIONS</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>spelling</li> <li>punctuation</li> <li>grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes several errors; may make parts hard to follow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some errors, but these do not affect meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks</li> </ul>

# Grade 4 Rating Scale for Writing Stories and Poems

## (Not Yet Within Expectations)

Student achievement in writing stories and poems by March–April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas</li> <li>use of detail</li> <li>awareness of audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>topic or point of the story or poem may be unclear</li> <li>reveals few details; <b>development may be illogical</b></li> <li>shows little awareness of audience</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, variety, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basic, simple language; may include errors in word choice</li> <li><b>sentences are poorly constructed</b>, with little variety or control (may be written as one sentence)</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> <b>STORIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>storyline or plot (sequence; development)</li> <li>beginning and ending</li> <li><b>characters</b></li> <li>dialogue</li> <li>connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning may be confusing, with no clear story problem</li> <li>includes some action and events, but these are not <b>logically sequenced</b> or developed into a complete or logical story; often very brief</li> <li><b>characters</b> are usually named but not described, and their relationship to each other is unclear</li> <li>if dialogue is included, it is confusing (in some cases, the entire story is dialogue, but the reader cannot tell who is speaking)</li> <li>disjointed; often written as a single paragraph; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., <i>and</i>, <i>then</i>) or omits them altogether</li> <li>ending may be missing or illogical</li> </ul>
<b>POEMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poetic form</li> <li>descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>needs the support of a frame or template</li> <li>uses little or no descriptive language</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frequent, repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand</li> <li>many incomplete or run-on sentences</li> <li>may misspell simple words; word endings may be omitted or formed incorrectly</li> <li>capitals and periods often omitted or misused</li> <li>frequent errors in pronouns (overuse; noun-pronoun agreement) and verbs (tense; subject-verb agreement)</li> <li>parts may be difficult to read</li> </ul>

What does **development may be illogical** mean?

**Illogical development** in writing indicates that the ideas presented don't link together and therefore do not make sense. For example, a writer might place a character in an exotic, far off jungle and in the next sentence they are at home. There has been no explanation of how the character arrived back at home, or the problems they encountered in the jungle were not solved.

What is meant by **sentences are poorly constructed**?

A **poorly constructed sentence** sounds awkward and does not make sense. It may be lacking action or a subject, or the words may be poorly ordered.



For more information see the BC Performance Standards

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote a story about having a cloak of invisibility.

Teacher’s Observations

The writing is very brief and disjointed and is hard to understand due to repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.

Student Sample

The example shows a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that is Not Yet Within Expectations for a student in Grade 4 by March-April of the school year.

**Illogically sequenced events** – The sequence of events in the story is confusing.

**Use of conventions** – Capitals and periods are omitted; parts are difficult to read.

[Original student sample not available]

**TRANSCRIPT**  
ta school to day I was playing with my friend and I her sister cam and to want ta play with me and my cloak and I siad yes and her sister siad yes to we had fun playing with the cloak we wnet to her and then I son my friend

**Sentences are poorly constructed** – The writing is made of one long string of words.

**Characters** – In the story, the characters are named (a friend and her sister) but not described.

# Grade 4 Rating Scale for Writing Stories and Poems

## (Fully Meets Expectations)

Student achievement in writing stories and poems by March–April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Fully Meets Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b> <i>Note: the snapshot can be used alone as a holistic scale in some situations.</i>	<i>The writing is a complete, easy-to-follow story or poem with some interesting detail. Shows growing control of written language; few errors.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas</li> <li><u>use of detail</u></li> <li><u>awareness of audience</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develops a concrete, direct story or poem by drawing on and adding to ideas from class discussion and other works; has some sense of individuality</li> <li>includes some <u>supporting details</u> that add colour to parts of the writing (most often the beginning)</li> <li>appears to consider the <u>audience</u> or reader's reaction in choosing content</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity, <u>variety</u>, and impact of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generally relies on clear, direct language, with some storytelling language and description; beginning to play with language (in a simple way)</li> <li>some <u>variety in sentence length and pattern</u></li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> STORIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>storyline or plot (<u>sequence</u>; development)</li> <li>beginning and ending</li> <li>characters</li> <li>dialogue</li> <li><u>connecting words</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning introduces the situation</li> <li>includes a logically sequenced series of events; connections among events are not always clear</li> <li>some characters are described, and their feelings may be explained (story focuses on action)</li> <li>dialogue is generally clear and may reveal something about the character who is speaking</li> <li>uses paragraphs and includes a variety of ordering or <u>connecting words</u> (e.g., <i>next, then, so, after, when, but</i>)</li> <li>conclusion may be abrupt or hard to believe</li> </ul>
POEMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poetic form</li> <li>descriptive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>writes in poetic form (usually one that has been directly modelled); may have trouble with the "rules" in places</li> <li>uses descriptive language</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete sentences</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>capitals</li> <li>end of sentence punctuation</li> <li>grammar/ usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some errors, but these do not affect meaning</li> <li>most sentences are complete; few run-on sentences</li> <li>most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes</li> <li>basic sentence punctuation is correct; may be errors in use of commas in dialogue or in longer, more complex sentences</li> <li>most pronouns and verbs are correct; may be some errors in subject-verb agreement, especially where there are compound subjects, and in pronoun form</li> <li>legible; clearly and neatly presented</li> </ul>

### How does a child gain awareness of the audience?

The audience is any person who reads the child's writing. Children can gain awareness of audience by having many experiences of a variety of people reading their work and discussing it with them. Parents can play a big role in this development by reading and discussing their child's writing with them. Also, reading and discussing books with your child helps them to see how authors write for an audience

### What is meant by variety in sentence length and pattern?

Sentence pattern is the order that words commonly occur in sentences. Sentence variety might look like this: "I went to the swimming pool. While I was there, the lifeguard had to jump in the pool. She saved a little boy. It was pretty cool!" Each sentence is a different length and uses a variety of word-order patterns.

### What are connecting words?

Connecting words are important for joining ideas together in sentences or between sentences. Examples include *and, because, next, but, so*, etc. Some connecting words are particularly useful for ordering information or events in stories (e.g., *when, after, first, second*). Using a range of these words demonstrates a variety of ordering.

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

In the sample that follows, students wrote a story about having a cloak of invisibility.

Teacher’s Observations

The writing is complete and easy to follow, with some interesting detail.

Student Sample

The example shows part of the student’s original work and a typed copy (transcript) of the entire piece of writing. The example illustrates work that Fully Meets Expectations for a student in Grade 4 by March-April of the school year. Please note: there may be spelling errors in the transcript.

Connecting words

– The writer uses a variety of connecting words to join ideas together (when, looked, soon).

Supporting details

– The writing includes some supporting details that add colour and the writer uses clear, simple, and direct language.

Use of

conventions – The writing contains correct spelling for most familiar words; the writing demonstrates correct basic sentence punctuation.

The Invisible Cloak

It was an early summer morning when my mom and I decided to go to the Abortsford Flea market. When we got there we started to look for a Halloween costume for October.

Variety in sentence length and pattern

– The writing has sentences of different length and uses words in different patterns.

TRANSCRIPT

The Invisible Cloak

It was an early summer morning when my Mom and I decided to go to the Abortsford Flea market. When we got there we started to look for a Halloween costume for October. I saw a beautiful cloak with silver leather stars. The stars shimmered as if they were crystals. "How much does the cloak cost," I asked, counting my money. "For you dear, five dollars." Said the lady. "Well then I'll buy it. It'll make a wonderful Halloween costume." I said happily. After, we went home.

As soon as we got home I tried on the cloak. When I looked in the mirror I couldn't see myself or the cloak! I rubbed my eyes to see if it was real. It was! I quietly hid the cloak under my bed. I didn't tell my mom or anybody because I was afraid they would take it away.

Soon Halloween arrived. I was invited to go trick-or-treating with my friends. When I was walking over to my friend's house I saw other school friends walking. I decided to play a trick on them. So I put on my cloak, but took off my hood so that when they saw me all they saw was my head! They were scared and amazed at the same time. When I got home I took the cloak off and stuffed it under my bed and went to sleep. When I woke up I reached for my cloak but it wasn't there. Instead there was a different cloak that was visible and five dollars.

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Story sequence

– The story has a logically sequenced beginning, middle, and end.

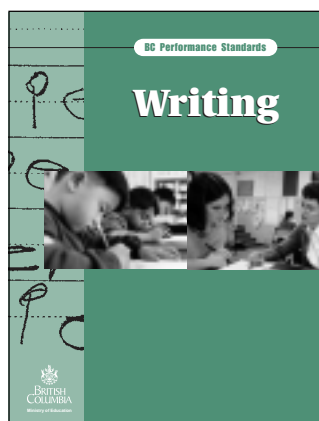
Audience

– Work is often written for a specific reader or type of reader. The writer is beginning to show awareness of audience. To explain ideas to the audience, the writer includes conversation that is generally clear and tells something about the character who is speaking.



# Helping Your Child at Home

The following suggestions are organized into four categories that match the BC Performance Standards aspects for Writing: meaning, style, form, and conventions. Pick activities to help your child's specific needs. All the activities help your child's writing skills.



## Activities to Support Aspect 1: Meaning

### OPPORTUNITIES TO WRITE

- ♦ Children can hardly resist post-it notes, and they come in wonderful colours and shapes! Provide post-it notes for your child to write on. Encourage your child to write messages on them to leave around the house.
- ♦ For many writers, getting started is the hardest part. If your child can't think of a topic to write about, there are lots of ways you can help. Start with what they are "experts" at — skateboarding, dance lessons, a family vacation, their pets. Help them to hunt for ideas at the library, browse books and magazines, "surf" the Internet. Once your child has chosen a topic, help them generate ideas for writing about it. Have them jot down what they already know and ask: *What else do you need to find out about this topic?*
- ♦ Create a scrapbook or journal with your child. They can include family photos, drawings, and pictures from magazines, stickers, or souvenirs. Help your child label the items and write down their thoughts or feelings about each.
- ♦ For younger/beginning writers have your child tell you about the photos, drawings, etc., and write it down for them.
- ♦ To help your child understand that writing has a **purpose**, have them write thank-you letters or invitations to friends and family. When going to the store, have your child write the grocery list.
- ♦ To help your child understand about the **audience** for their writing, have them share their writing with friends and family members. Practise first and ask your child if they think the listener will understand their story. Ask questions such as *Do you think your listeners will get that part? What can you do to help them understand that part better?*



## DETAILS

♦ Ask your child questions about their story, particularly about how the drawings connect to the words they have written. If their story does not match their picture, then help by asking specific questions about their drawing to pull out details.

♦ Ask your child specific questions about characters, setting, or objects in their story that could be more detailed. Ask about what they can hear, feel, touch, taste, smell, or see. For objects, consider questions about colour, size, age, texture, weight, and whether the object reminds them of something else. Encourage these additions to their story.

♦ Talk with your child about their writing, and encourage them to add colours, feeling words, and size and shape words in places where they might fit.

## STORY PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

♦ Play detective when you read with your child – try to figure out what the story problem is and how the characters will solve it. Stop reading before you reach the end of the story and ask your child to predict how the problem will be solved. (The ability to predict a logical ending is an important skill that will help your child write better endings to their own stories.)

♦ To help your child write better story endings, encourage them to include some ideas about how the characters feel after the problem is solved (solution) or what they may have learned during the story.

## WRITING “IN YOUR OWN WORDS”

♦ A great way to encourage children to write in their own words is to follow the No More Than Four Words Per Fact rule: When your child collects information from books or the Internet, have them record each fact on a post-it note, using no more than four words per fact! This rule helps them avoid copying “word for word.” When they write the first draft of their report, they can put each fact into their own words. For example, if your child is researching whales, a note might include the words *babies born under water*. Your child might then write a sentence saying, *All baby whales are born under water.*

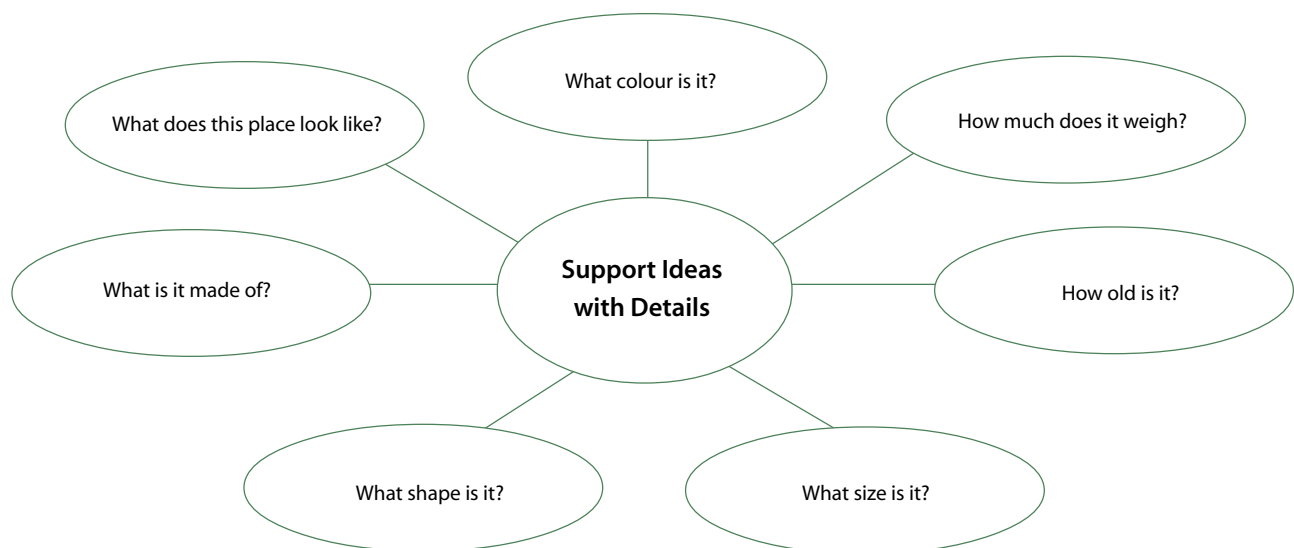
## SUPPORTING IDEAS WITH DETAILS AND EXAMPLES

♦ **Supporting ideas with details** is like colouring in a picture. To encourage your child to add descriptive details to their writing, ask them to pretend they are looking at a photograph. Ask questions about what they see in their mind's eye. What colour is the object they are writing about? What size is it? What is their character wearing? What is the weather like? Talk to your child about how they can work these **details** into their writing.

♦ When you read with your child, talk about the **details** the writer has used to make their stories more interesting. Point out the words in a story that tell the

reader more about the character, the setting, the place, and the time (e.g., a mysterious package, the chattering squirrels).

♦ Encourage your child to be a keen observer. When you are outdoors, have them close their eyes for a moment and listen to the sounds around them. Go to a busy mall for some “people-watching.” You and your child can make a game of guessing where a person is going or what they do for a living, based on your careful observations. Your child might want to jot down “clues” in a notebook, like “Harriet the Spy”!



## Questions about Meaning for Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Could you show me some samples of writing that Fully Meets Expectations for this level?
- How can I encourage my child to include **relevant details** in their writing?
- How can I encourage my child to support their **opinions**?
- How can I help my child see which **details** are important to their topic and which are irrelevant?
- How can we encourage our child to include explanations, **details**, and **examples** to clarify their written work?
- How do I encourage my child to **support** and elaborate their ideas?
- What are some ways I can help my child to write in their own words?

**Note:** Using samples of actual work will be most helpful as you talk about these questions.

## Activities to Support Aspect 2: Style

### VOCABULARY

◆ Help your child to “label” details in their picture. This will provide a bank of words to use in their writing. For example, if your child has drawn a picture of their trip to the carnival, help them label the rides, the booths, the people, and the actions contained in the picture.

◆ Use magnetic words on the fridge (or cut words out of newspapers and magazines) to collect “other ways” of saying a vague or overused word (e.g., *nice*, *went*). Challenge your child to find words that are more specific (e.g., instead of *We went to the store*, try *We walked to the store* or *We drove to the store* or *We hurried to the store*).

◆ To show your child how to add interesting language to their story, help them see where describing words fit. Reread a story together and try adding “colour” words. For example, *The sun shone in the sky* can become *The yellow sun shone in the blue sky*.

◆ Brainstorm words that are associated with your child’s topic. For example, the topic “carnival” might generate words like *rides*, *exciting*, *cotton candy*, *pink*, *fluffy*, *Ferris wheel*, *scary*, *high*, *fast*, *waiting*, *tickets*, *haunted house*, *pony rides*, and *smelly*. Encourage your child to use these words in their writing.

◆ When you read with your child, notice and talk about the storytelling language – the words or clues that let the reader know the story is make-believe (e.g., *once upon a time*, or animals that can talk). Ask your child what they notice about make-believe characters or mythical places. Encourage your child to use story language when they write their own stories.

◆ Encourage your child to use figurative language. Look for places in their writing where they could add more details by comparing one thing to another, using *as* or *like*. For example, *The boy ran home* could be changed to *The boy ran home as fast as a rocket*. *My sister’s toes were stinky* could become *My sister’s toes were as smelly as a garbage can*. *The candle was burning* could be made more descriptive by changing it to *The burning candle was like a star twinkling in the sky*.

### DEVELOPING STYLE

◆ Challenge your child to persuade you – in writing – that a household rule is unfair.

◆ Ask your child to draw a fictional character while you describe it. Use lots of **details**. For example, *Her hair is dyed orange and is gelled so it stands straight up in spikes. She has a tattoo on her upper right arm. It looks like a cobra. When she smiles, I notice a glimpse of silver from her front tooth. An electric guitar is slung over her left shoulder.* Describe the character with as many **details** as you can so your child can draw it. Then, encourage your child to write some words that describe what the person is like based on the drawing. For example, in the character sketch above, they might write words like *musician*, *punk*, *attitude*, *hip*, *kind*, *helpful*, *teen*, and *unique*. Ask your child to think of things this person might say and to write them down.

## SENTENCES

♦ To expand **short, stilted sentences**, try taking a single sentence and take turns with your child to add additional words to make a longer sentence. For example, if the sentence was *The frog jumped*, the first player could say *The green frog jumped*, the second player could say *The green frog jumped and splashed*, and the first player could add *The green frog jumped and splashed in the pond...*

♦ To help students write sentences that are not **long and rambling**, have them reread their sentences out loud, stopping only when they have a period. Then ask them to look for places where they could “put on the brakes” by adding more periods and taking out words like *and* and *then*.

♦ To encourage your child to try different **sentence patterns**, play a story-building game using a die. Each

person must add the number of words to a sentence as indicated on the die. Write down the sentences as you are creating them. For example, you roll a two and start your sentence with *A frog*, the next player rolls a three and adds *jumped on a*, and the first player rolls a one and finishes the sentence by adding *log*. So the sentence reads *A frog jumped on a log*. Sometimes a new sentence will be started in the middle of a turn.

♦ Encourage your child to join **simple sentences** together using interesting connecting words. Challenge them to “say it longer and say it stronger” by adding **details**. For example, *The bear hibernated in the winter* is a simple sentence. A more complex (longer and stronger) sentence would be *After gorging on salmon during the fall, the bear crawled into its den to hibernate until the spring*.

## Questions about Style for Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Can you show me some examples of **long, rambling sentences**?
- How can I encourage my child to use language that is **clear, direct**, and specific?
- How can I help my child avoid writing in **stilted sentences**?
- How can I help my child to be more exact or specific in their writing?
- How can I help my child write sentences that have more variety in **length and pattern**?
- What are some strategies my child could use to ensure their writing flows smoothly?
- What are some ways I can help my child understand the purpose of their piece of writing?

**Note:** Using samples of actual work will be most helpful as you talk about these questions.

## Activities to Support Aspect 3: Form

### WRITING WORDS

◆ Encourage your child to pretend write (scribble) things like notes to you or things on a list. Help them to think about what letters they can hear in the word. Can they write any letters they hear?

◆ To help your child move from writing a **string of letters**, provide some simple “**frame**” sentences for them to fill in. For example, *I can see a \_\_\_\_\_*, or *The dog was \_\_\_\_\_*. Children can write a number of these sentences, adding a different word each time to form a simple story.

◆ Have your child create their own alphabet book by drawing or cutting out pictures or taking photos of objects around the house that begin with each letter of the alphabet. Use a **sentence frame** like *A is for (apple). Apples are \_\_\_\_\_*.

◆ After your child has drawn a picture to go with their story, ask them to dictate the sentence they want to go with their picture. On your fingers, count how many words are in the sentence, and draw a line for each word. Write the story with your child, passing the pencil back and forth. Have your child write all the letters/sounds they know for each word in their sentence, then you write down the letters/sounds they don't know. (Often this will be the vowels or sounds in the middle of the words.) Have your child reread the sentence when it is completed.

### USING **CONNECTING WORDS**

◆ Look at familiar stories you have at home for how the author indicates the passage of time. You will notice words like *a few days later, the next day, after she woke up, one day, then, first, second, third, finally*, etc.

Encourage your child to start using these kinds of **connecting words** in their story.

◆ Help your child go through their story and use a highlighter to mark the **connecting words** they have used. Brainstorm possible alternatives to add variety, improve the flow, and avoid overusing the most common words, like *and* or *then*. You can also use the highlighter to mark **connecting words** in newspapers or magazines. This will give your child new ideas for **connecting** the events in their writing.

### WRITING DIALOGUE

◆ To help your child use dialogue to enhance their stories, discuss what their characters are thinking or feeling at the most exciting parts of the story. Ask what words they might say, and discuss different ways of saying them.

◆ Look at comic books together. Talk about how the dialogue bubbles are used to show what the characters are saying to each other. Compare this to the way dialogue is written in books.

## ORGANIZING IDEAS

- ♦ A good way to help your child see that ideas are organized differently in various forms is to notice the written forms you encounter in your everyday activities. For example, if you and your child are cooking together, draw their attention to the recipe. Point out the way the ingredients are listed first, followed by the instructions (which may be written as numbered steps).
- ♦ Look at information books together and point out headings, pictures, captions, and labels (**text features**).
- ♦ When you read with your child, talk about the **story endings**. Ask them if they liked the ending, or how they would make it better.
- ♦ Play a game where each player describes the steps you go through to make something without telling what they are making (e.g., peanut butter sandwich, birthday cake, toast). Before you start to play, look through a variety of recipe books (children's recipe books are the best) with your child to show them how recipes are written. The people watching try to guess what is being made by listening to all the steps right to the end. Then they can reveal their guess. Ask your child to select one "recipe" and write the **sequence** of steps.
- ♦ When reading aloud to your child, discuss with them what things the author wrote at the **beginning** of their story, what they put in the **middle** of the story, and how the author **ended** their story.
- ♦ If your child is doing research for a report, have them gather their facts on cards or post-it notes (one fact per note). To develop paragraphs with related ideas, help your child group together facts that are closely related. For example, if they're writing a report on a famous athlete, all the facts relating to the person's childhood (e.g., birthdate, birthplace, parents, education) would be grouped to become a paragraph. Facts about how the person became a sports star (e.g., childhood sports, early training, amateur teams, professional teams) would go into a different group. Continue organizing the facts in groups. If a fact doesn't fit a category, discuss whether it should be left out. Once all the facts are organized into groups, help your child develop a sentence that tells the topic of the paragraph (this is called a topic sentence). Support your child while they change their notes into sentences for each paragraph.

## Questions about Form for Parent-Teacher Conferences

- What strategies can I use to help my child when their writing is disjointed and lacks a sense of **sequence**?
- How long should a report or other piece of writing be at this level?
- How can I encourage my child to use ordering or **connecting words** correctly to avoid abrupt transitions in their writing?
- What are some **strategies** I can use to help my child develop their topic?
- What are some effective ways my child can include **visual features** in their writing?

**Note:** Using samples of actual work will be most helpful as you talk about these questions.

## Activities to Support Aspect 4: Conventions

### SPELLING

- ♦ When reading with your child, occasionally look together at an interesting word. Help your child to notice what sound it starts and ends with and how many other letters it has.
- ♦ Help your child to “spell” unknown words by raising a finger for each sound the word contains. Have them write down the letter for each sound. For example, *toe* has two sounds and may be written by a beginner as “t-o.” *House* has three sounds and may be written as “h-w-s.” It is more important at this stage for children to hear all the sounds in the word than to correctly match the letters and sounds.
- ♦ Have your child go on a word hunt around your house. Give them a small clipboard, and as they notice objects, have them sound the object’s name out and record what sounds they hear in the word (e.g., *stove* might be “s-t-o-v”).
- ♦ Play “I Spy” with letter sounds: “I spy something that starts with a ‘k’ sound.”
- ♦ Encourage your child to break words into sound chunks (syllables) and then spell each part to the best of their ability. For example, *volcano* would be “vol-ca-no.”
- ♦ Have your child help write the grocery list. They can draw a small picture and then label it by writing the sounds they hear in the object.
- ♦ Practise spelling basic words with magnetic letters, shaving cream, popcorn, macaroni, pipe cleaners, or chocolate pudding on a cookie sheet, etc. Using materials such as these makes the practice more fun and helps children learn through their own learning style.
- ♦ Choose words from your child’s writing and help them practise spelling them.

- ♦ Just as babies learn to speak by imitating adults, beginning writers scribble, draw letter-like shapes, write single letters, **string unrelated letters** together, and use invented, or temporary, spellings. Over time, children learn to write and spell as adults do. Learning to understand and use the conventions of language – like learning to speak – takes time and experience.
- ♦ Children in primary grades are not expected to know the terms of grammar (e.g., nouns, verbs, adjectives, complex sentences). The terms that appear in the performance standards are intended to be used by adults.

### SENTENCE STRUCTURE

- ♦ To help your child write **complete sentences**, remind them that every sentence needs a main character (person, place, or thing) and an action (e.g., *saw, jumped, is, became*).
- ♦ Help your child correct **long, rambling sentences** that contain too many ideas strung together with *and* or *because*. Have your child use a highlighter to mark the **“connecting” words**. You can then help your child decide where the sentence can be broken into smaller pieces.



## PUNCTUATION

- ♦ To encourage your child's use of periods and question marks, discuss punctuation when reading stories together. Have your child notice that every new sentence starts with a capital letter and every sentence ends with either a period, question mark, or exclamation mark.
- ♦ Play with sentences by saying them in different ways that show different forms of punctuation. Have your child identify what kind of punctuation marks should be used. For example, *This soup is hot*, or *This SOUP IS HOT!* How you say the sentence out loud will determine the punctuation. As well, change sentences into questions — *I saw a deer. Did you see a deer?*
- ♦ When reading familiar books to your child, point out how every sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a period. When they are writing their story, remind them of what the authors in their storybooks do each time they write a sentence.
- ♦ Find examples of dialogue (conversation) in story books. Help your child notice how the author punctuates dialogue (e.g., using quotation marks).
- ♦ Remind your child to go back and read their work when they're finished. Ask them: *Does every sentence begin with a capital? Do any of your sentences ask a question?*

## Questions about Conventions for Parent-Teacher Conferences

- How can I help my child remember how a sentence starts and ends?
- What strategies can you suggest to correct repeated **errors**?
- How can we encourage our child to put more effort into their presentation?
- Could you show me some examples of work that Fully Meets Expectations at this level?
- What are some strategies for building punctuation skills?
- How can we encourage our child to use more **complex** language in their writing?
- How can I support my child in taking risks with newly acquired language?

**Note:** Using samples of actual work will be most helpful as you talk about these questions.



# Who Was Involved

The development of these documents was sponsored by the Ministry of Education and involved representatives of the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC), the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF), and the BC Principals and Vice-Principals Association (BCPVPA).

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